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A

NOBLE PURPOSE NOBLY WON.

An old, old Story.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "MARY POWELL."

A. Manning.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



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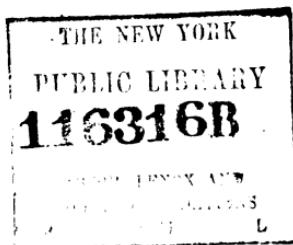
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A

NOBLE PURPOSE NOBLY WON.

CHAPTER I.

IT is high time to quit the shadow of the *fleur-de-lis*, and see what is doing in the English camp. This was no just and necessary war, and therefore we did not deserve to win: on the other hand, our captains were brave, able men, infinitely superior to the French leaders, who were fitter for the tilting-ground. But then, look at the common men; the English battalions were made up, Monstrelet says (who saw them),

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of the mere refuse of our country—literal food for powder: the French men-at-arms, like Jeannot Darc, fought for home and hearth, mother and sister, father and brother, every personal belonging, down to cat and magpie. We know how that feeling will carry on.

Besides, we English were much too cruel. We had, it may be said, national honour to redeem, royal patrimony to reclaim, insults to avenge, and so on; but there was too much thirst for *annexation*; and what chiefly led us on was downright love of fighting and of getting the upper hand, under the conviction that Englishmen could literally do no wrong; and the actual cruelty with which Edward the Third and the Black Prince had carried this out, made their shining qualities all the more dangerous, for those who followed the black plume and surcoat

J Q V W

swam after them through a sea of blood.
(French metaphor again; sacred to the
memory of Bluebeard.)

Sir William Gladsdale, who held Les Tournelles with five hundred knights, had been supping that evening with some of his friends. There had been a sally from the town; and though it was only a feint, to divert attention from the embarkation, and had led to no other result, it was talked of as an unsuccessful attempt of the besieged; and the news just brought in that a considerable body of French had been seen in full retreat towards Blois through the Sologne, helped to enliven them. There was a nice little saddle of Sologne mutton, and a boar's head, and a dish or two of herrings, for supper; and it was laughingly observed how glad the poor rats across the water would be of the bones. Joan's impertinent letter from Blois was

spoken of with disgust and scorn — “ ~~low!~~ ^{low!} ” they called it. They laughed ~~at~~ at the mess she had made of their names; and Gladysdale’s free translation of the following passage was received with literal shouts of merriment. “ If you will not believe the word of the Maid, we will cut our way right through you, meet where we may, and make such a tow-row as there has not been in France these thousand years! ”*

“ Make mince meat of us, in fact,” said Sir Thomas Scales, laughing.

Sir William Gladysdale was still chuckling at the joke, when a distant uproar caught his ear. “ In the name of wonder what noise is that? ” said he.

“ What noise? ” said they all, stopping short.

* “ Et ferons un si grand ha-hay, qu'il m' y en a pas eu en France depuis mille ans.”

"Don't you hear that uproar across the water?"

Just, then, a squire came in, looking much excited.

"Sir William, there is something going on in the town."

"No need to tell us that," said Sir William, hastening out, followed by his guests. "What is it?"

"We fancy," said the squire, hesitating, "that we hear them cry 'La Pucelle!'"

"You don't say so!" cried Sir William. "What, the milkmaid? Beat to arms, you fool!"

They listened eagerly for a moment, and could distinctly hear the cry.

"How on earth could she have got in?" said Gladsdale, looking at Sir Thomas Scales. "Perhaps on a broomstick, for that is your witch's favourite equipage."

"I could swear it was not during the sortie," said Sir Thomas, "for we watched the gates as a cat does a mouse-hole."

"It must have been during the squall. Perhaps she blew it up!"

"'Tis no good," said he at last, after listening long and uneasily to the *susurra* of the multitude. "The fools are too busy with their merry-making to come out to-night. Spoil their sport by a shell or two, and then turn in."

Early next morning, before his eyes were well open, he called out to his squire in attendance—

"Jasper, what news?"

"A letter has just been shot across the chasm, attached to an arrow," said Jasper.

"Give it me, then. 'To Glacidas.' Ha, ha, ha! from the lady herself; very politely requesting us to raise the siege, or she must

proceed to extremities. I am afraid she will be reduced to that alternative."

He laughed contemptuously, and began to dress himself.

"Depend on it," said he, "that now they have this hussy among them, the world will hardly be big enough to hold them. Has she brought them supplies, think you?"

"An impudent varlet," replied Jasper, "just now distinctly bawled across, 'We have plenty to eat!'"

"Ha! saucy dog! Just like their insolence. No reinforcements, I conclude?"

"A messenger from St. Jean le Blanc has just come in to say that about two hundred lances embarked there yesternight, and ascended the river under cover of the darkness."

"And do you mean to say," cried Sir William, red with anger, "that the garrison of

St. Jean le Blanc never struck a stroke to hinder them?"

"They were overawed," said Jasper, "for the lances were backed by a considerable force under De Boussac himself."

"Tut, tut! they made a bad job of it," said Gladsdale. "No doubt the lances covered the girl's embarkation. However, I am not going to be frightened by a woman. What of our men?"

"They are very much impressed by her arrival."

"Impressed!—that means depressed, I suppose. The boobies! you must hammer it well into them that she is nothing in the world but a witch."

"Yes, Sir William; only witches are rather awkward customers——".

"Pooh, pooh! they can do nothing save under certain conditions; and hurt them-

selves, I suspect, more than any one else, poor wretches!"

"The men, however, say that though they fear no earthly foe, they are not prepared to fight the devil."

"I see I must speak a word to them myself," said Gladysdale. "Here, give me my belt. I will step out and look about me."

"See, see, she comes!" cried Jasper, in excitement. "The Maid is on the bridge!"

Sir William eagerly looked out. "I see no woman," said he.

"She is in male attire," said Jasper. "Do you not see that stripling in the white surcoat? That is she."

"By St. George!" and after another earnest look, he hastened out of the fort; and there they stood, face to face, on opposite sides of the broken arch, with the eddying stream

between them, like Wallace and Bruce on the banks of Carron.

Joan was looking about for him; and as soon as Dunois said "That is he!" she raised her voice, and cried—

"*A toi, Glacidas!* In the name of the Lord, raise the siege and march back into your own country!"

"Ho, ho, ho! Hear her! hear her! hear her!" was the derisive answer. "Oyez, oyez, oyez!"

"You may scoff, vain man," said she, colouring very much, "but the Lord hears you. He has promised I shall raise the siege, and I would fain do it without bloodshed."

"At her, boys, with your tongues," said Gladsdale. "This is too ridiculous for any other answer."

So one began to sing derisively—

"Where are you going, my pretty maid ?"
"I'm going a milking, sir," she said ;"

while another bellowed "Milk ! any milk ?" and then began to low like a cow and bleat like a sheep, in which he was joined by many an English bumpkin, who had been taken from the plough and the fold to fight King Harry's battles in France, and who now cheered one another on with shouts of laughter. Joan began to cry. They could see her brush the hot drops from her eyes, and immediately began with, "Oh, the pretty dear ! spare her feelings ! Oh, how sorry we are ! We've affronted the milkmaid !" "Milk ! milk ! any milk ?" "Oh, we are so frightened ! Here's the girl as fed pigs come to raise the siege of Orleans !" "Ha, ha, ha ! Ho, ho, ho ! Ha, ha, ha !"

Gladstone roared with laughter, and if scoffing and jibing could have opened the gates

of Orleans, they would soon have marched into it.

"This is intolerable!" cried Dunois, indignantly. "It is worse than being pelted with dead cats and rotten eggs. Come away, they are going on from fun and mockery to wicked words you should not hear."

So she turned away with crimson cheeks, followed by cries of "Prithee, stay! now, don't be frightened," &c., which delighted Sir William Gladsdale in the highest degree, as he thought his men, by seeing how vulnerable the Maid was to sarcasm, would lose their superstitious dread of her.

Dunois was nettled, and said, — "This was altogether a false move of yours, as I told you it would be. Where are you going next?"

"Oh, to prayers!" said Joan, as if in surprise there could be a question on the

subject; "and then to council. Tell the chiefs I want to see them."

So the chiefs met her, very sullen at having to obey such a call, and much disposed to put her down at the first word.

"Sirs," said she, "here am I in Orleans, to help you at your wish; and without delay we must attack the English."

"There are two sides to that question, Maid," said De Gaucourt, coughing a little; "we do not wish to be precipitate."

"Why, what am I here for?" said Joan. "I am not going to play at fighting, but to fight in earnest; and I desire to send my herald Ambleville forthwith to the camp of Sire Talbot."

"Ah but, Maid, I have no mind to go," said Ambleville, who ventured on an insubordination to a woman he would not have dared to exercise to a master, because he

thought he saw the chiefs were on his side, and would uphold him. "The person of a herald is sacred," pursued he, "wherever warfare is conducted on the pure principles of chivalry; but these barbarian English have not the least respect for them, and threaten to burn my brother-herald, Guyenne, for having borne your former letter. This is a fate I have no mind for."

"You need not be afraid, Ambleville," interposed Dunois, "for I have spoken so roundly to them, declaring I will retaliate on the English heralds we have in our hands, that they will not harm a hair of Guyenne's head."

"No, no," added Joan, "they will harm neither you nor me. Merely go and tell Talbot to arm, for that I shall arm also, and to draw out his forces before the town, where if he takes me prisoner, he may burn me, if he

will ; but if I overpower him, he shall raise the siege and quit for England with all his men.”

“ And you may tell him from me,” added Dunois, “ that I shall detain the heralds he has sent to treat for ransoms as hostages for your safety and that of Guyenne.”

On this mission, Ambleville very reluctantly prepared to depart ; but a warm debate first ensued whether he should be allowed to do so. La Hire and Florent d’Hilliers were on Joan’s side ; Dunois sided with the other chiefs, who thought the message inopportune. But Joan was unpersuadable, and the Sire Guillaume de Gamache, seeing that she was gaining her point, rose from the council-board in passionate anger and said—

“ Since men of ripe experience are absolutely going to yield their better judgment to that of a raw slip of a girl, rather than of a chevalier like myself, I shall not contest the matter longer. In proper time and place,

my sword shall speak for me, and perhaps may lead me to my death; but my king and my honour will require it. Henceforth, however, I roll up my banner, and become no more than a simple squire. I can fight under an honest man, but not under a girl, who comes from nobody knows where."

Rolling up his banner, he gave it to Dunois. He received it with a start, and looked full of concern; for, though he thought Joan was acting unadvisedly and precipitately, he had great faith and hope in her.

"This must not be," said he, abruptly. "Gamache, give me your hand,—and you, Maid, give me yours. Put aside all this heat and obstinacy till we can afford to lose two such true hearts. Come, make it up; embrace, and have done with it!"*

* "Il le fit baisser en la joue la Pucelle, ce qui firent les deux avec rechir."—*Vie de Gamache*.

Gamache made an awful grimace, but complied; and Joan, feeling that she might have been urging her own ardent will too much as if it must needs be the will of Heaven, was talked over by Dunois into conceding the point. He, on his part, promised to show the utmost alacrity in attacking the English, directly the right time should come; and engaged with her faithful squire D'Aulon, who took a deep interest in this scene, in which her reputation was so much involved, to go to Blois, and hasten the reinforcements.

So, with this amicable arrangement, the council broke up; La Hire fanning himself and declaring she had made him as hot as July. After this, she mounted her white horse, perambulated the city, and reconnoitred the enemy's entrenchments, accompanied by the gentlemen and ladies of the place, and a crowd of the populace.

Sunday, the 1st of May, was kept holy with much prayer and confession. On Monday, Joan and La Hire, De Metz, De Poulenguy, and a good proportion of the garrison, saw Dunois and D'Aulon on the road to Blois. It was a lovely spring morning, and as they traversed the devastated plain, where, a year ago, had smiled the garden, orchard, and vineyard, here and there a self-sown garden-flower that had escaped the spoiler, bloomed beneath their horses' hoofs. Not an Englishman stirred: the grim bastilles were full of watchful eyes, but not so much as an arrow whistled through the air to annoy them, going or returning. It was strangely exhilarating, this *promenade militaire*, in full sight of the enemy, close to danger without the least brush of it.

Louis de Contes, rather wide of the mark, said to Pierre, "This is war; how do you like it?" to which the other more truly replied,

“Very much.” These boys were very sorry they had not been present at the battle between the French and English pages, which had recently taken place, in which a little fellow had particularly distinguished himself, whom La Hire called Curly-pate, or Golden-locks.*

As Joan looked towards the city on their homeward course, she observed to La Hire that there must be an extensive view from the cathedral towers, and that she should like to see it after morning service.

“You and I, then,” said he, “will go up together.”

Accordingly, La Hire bent his steps towards the cathedral about the time he thought prayers would be over, but he found a *Via Crucis* had begun, which Joan and her companions were attending; and as he had no

* Cap-dorat.

mind for it himself, and was just then at leisure, he seated himself on a bench under the wall at the west end of the nave, absently gazing on the bright sunlight as it poured in many-coloured streams through the painted windows in the choir, and hearing the distant voice of the priest as he led the penitents to the different stations representing the various stages of our Saviour's progress, from the judgment-hall to Calvary. They paused at each station to repeat certain prayers, sing certain hymns, and hear certain appropriate exhortations. Three priests and several choisters were in attendance; and, owing to Joan's presence, the congregation was unusually numerous. As they crossed from one station to another, La Hire saw Father Pasquerel, Joan, and De Poulengey, suddenly and in succession, step into bright sunlight for a moment; and he could not but be struck

by the heavenly expression of the hollow-eyed Augustine, the noble, unaffected piety expressed in the countenance of De Poulengey, and the absorbed look of the girl, whose cheeks were wet with tears.*

Some sad, sweet memory of his early boyhood, when he, with his mother, had attended a *Via Crucis*, crossed the mind of the rugged warrior. It was Father Pasquerel's turn to exhort, and the attention of De Poulengey seemed so fixed, that La Hire was impelled by curiosity to draw near and hear.

"We know," Father Pasquerel was saying, "that there must be infinitely more difference between the Redeemer and ourselves, than between ourselves and the smallest fly. True, we have souls, which flies have not; but

* "Elle pleurait aux offices, et tout le monde pleurait."
—*Dépos. de Compaing, chanoine d'Orléans.*

suppose, for argument sake, a fly to have a soul, to be susceptible of our exquisite pleasures and mortal agonies, of our black remorse and fell despair. You would take a curious kind of interest in it, but in a superior sort of way. What if it were proposed to you to save its soul by the sacrifice of your own life? Yet how much less were this than what Christ has done for you!"

This simple image had a strong effect on La Hire.

"Again," said Father Pasquerel, after a pause, "suppose a foot-soldier fighting at dreadful disadvantage with three bloodthirsty foes, who have inflicted several terrible wounds on him already. He has hewn down one, thrown off another, but is got under by the third, who is on the point of giving him his *coup-de-grace*. All at once, some one behind and above him snatches him round the body,

drags him into his saddle, and gallops off with him into the rear! It is his captain-general, who, hastily embracing him, leaves him in safety and returns to the fight. Now, Christ is the captain of our salvation! and when He sees us borne down by our three deadly foes—the world, the flesh, and the devil—and *knows we are fighting His battle*, does He look on an uninterested spectator? Not He, my friends! I tell you, He dashes into the thick of the fray, to snatch them from destruction and place them in safety. Yes! and they shall swell His train when the Lord comes with ten thousand thousand of His saints, in the clouds of heaven, to judge the world that lieth in sin!"

This was enough for La Hire. He stepped into the shade, and raised his hand upward, whispering with great fervour, "Jesus, I am Thine!"

CHAPTER II.

Men were not so awfully afraid of being too good in those days as they are now—a fear of which there is very little need, if they would look into their own hearts and tempers. Too good! why, poor La Hire could remember a hundred instances in which he had been very bad indeed, and which he had no wish to palliate, in spite of excuses which we cannot plead. He started as if he had been shot, when Joan, who thought he was waiting for her, touched him on the arm and said she was ready to go up the tower.

“Certainly, certainly,” said he, brought immediately down from his altitudes to the

of a commoner description; and the next minute, he, De Poulengey, and De Metz were following her and the verger up the steep stone stairs.

Arrived on the flat roof of the tower, they all exclaimed with joy at the prospect of the country which lay before them as on a map; while immediately beneath them lay the city, revealing heaps of ruins where it had suffered most from the English cannon. To the north were the Earl of Suffolk's redoubts, near enough to each other, as Joan had already seen, to render any attempt to bring supplies into the town on that side extremely dangerous, though it was one of her fixed ideas. On the other side the river were the bastilles and boulevards* of Sir William Glads-

* "Espèces de bastions dont l'enceinte, en général carrée, et qui pouvait contenir cinq à six cents hommes, présentait un rempart en terrasse, garni d'un parapet et

dale; and La Hire pointed out to Joan the banners of the different commanders, and showed her where the auxiliary forces had lain till the Duke of Burgundy had withdrawn them in pique. His own troops in garrison were, as she said, like a little flock of kids. The sun, blazing overhead, in a sky of dazzling blue, flecked with white clouds that were driven by a brisk wind, revealed the most distant objects with clearness. The east was bounded by the immense forest of Orleans, which, even at the present day, contains ninety-four thousand acres, planted with oak and other valuable trees, and which then sheltered abundance of wolves and wild boars. To the westward, they could trace the course of the majestic Loire for many leagues, wind-

des embrasures pour les pièces d'artillerie, et assez élevé pour ne pouvoir être gravi sans échelles."—*Le Brun de Charnettes*, i. 121.

ing among desolated vineyards and corn-fields, and fed by many a tributary stream, like the blue veins on a lady's hand ; and the verger pointed out the junction of the little Loiret with the Loire. To the south, their eyes ranged over a wide expanse of flat country without any feature of interest, being that ill-conditioned, unprofitable district of Sologne in which they had so lately disconsolately wandered.

“I am glad I came up here,” said La Hire, “for now we can see the enemy’s weak points ;” and he discussed them with his companions, who heard him with intelligent attention. La Hire was a veteran leader, who could tell of many a well-contested field ; but he owned that it was a very difficult matter to have to do with the English, who never knew when they had had enough.

This was Monday. On the following day,

Tuesday, the 3rd of May, was held the Fête de la Cathédrale, which, owing to the influence of Joan and of Father Pasquerel, was kept with uncommon solemnity, and made a day of prayer and intercession as well as of thanksgiving. La Hire felt a desire to wipe out that heavy score of offences which, all at once, he had begun to feel very burthensome ; but to set about it like an ordinary person was not to be expected of him.

"I tell you, father," said he, as he paced the aisle with Father Pasquerel between services, "if you will but let me pray in my own way and my own words, pray I will ; but Latin prayers I cannot and will not abide. Firstly, I cannot remember them ; secondly, I cannot understand them ; and, thirdly, I don't feel them. But directly I heard that girl speak of and to the Lord, as one who understood French, and who was not only

up there, but down here, than I felt I could follow her!"

"Pray in French, then, by all means," said Father Pasquerel. "There is no occult virtue in Latin; and our Lord himself, when visibly on earth, spoke in Greek, which was the common parlance of the time and place. It is not the words you pray in, but the things you pray for, that are of consequence; and the Church has given us a sound form of words, in order that we may not pray amiss."

"The Church," said La Hire, "may use the words she understands, but they are no good to me who do not understand them; therefore I will none of your Ave Maria or Paternoster. By your leave, father, I will pray in French, or not at all."

"See," said the friar, stopping short, and laying the open palm of his hand on La Hire's

breast; "you and I are walking together, and we are also talking together. Now, if you and Jesus walk together, you must also talk together, or you will soon have had enough of one another's company. But one thing is clear—that if you do not walk together, you cannot talk together at all! How long is it since you confessed?"

"About ten years," said La Hire.

"Ten years!" exclaimed Father Pasquerel; for he was not detaching him from the only Christian church he knew of, but attaching him to Christ. "That is a long while indeed, my son, and you ought to be very thankful to our patient Lord for not cutting you off in the mean time. Suppose you were to ask a soldier how long it was since he had answered the roll-call, and he were to answer 'Ten years!'"

"I see clearly I have been remiss," said

La Hire, "and will go to it at once if you like; only let us make short work of it. It is impossible I can recollect everything I have done very bad, or only rather so, in that space of time. Mine has been a soldier's life, therefore you had better just call over the sins soldiers are particularly tempted to, and I'll say yes or no, as the case may be."

"Another service is just beginning," said the friar; "but after it, you will find me in the confessional."

"I will come to you there then," said La Hire, "and make a clean breast of it; after which, I dare say I shall feel as comfortable as a poor fellow who gets a warm bath for the first time in his life."

As Dunois and D'Aulon continued their course together, it would have been strange if the young Count had stinted his questions to his old squire concerning Joan, of whom

the latter had now had ample opportunity to form a correct opinion. All that D'Aulon said of her tended to convince Dunois that she was a girl of singular purity, simplicity, and integrity, who would scorn to feign an impulse she did not feel, and whose common sense on general subjects seemed inconsistent with mysticism and fanaticism. As this completely tallied with Dunois' preconceived opinion, and as frankness and probity were qualities he especially admired, he very freely threw himself into her cause, and resolved to carry out her wishes, though he still thought her no tactician.

He found he had done wisely to undertake this journey to Blois, for the captains, and, above all, the Chancellor, were questioning the expediency of sending any more succours to Orleans. Dunois vividly represented that all would be lost if they failed to support it

now; and if Orleans, why, then the country and kingdom, for it would be like opening a sluice which would involve a general inundation. D'Aulon raised his steady voice in confirmation of the young man's eager protest; and, won over by their prayers and assurances, they at length consented that the second convoy should depart on the morrow. It was stronger than the first, and the garrison of Orleans, with La Hire and his two hundred lances, could second it better. There were flocks and herds, and many heavy waggon-loads of provisions; but what of that, with Dunois, De Boussac, and "Bluebeard" for their guard?

On their way to Orleans, news was brought to Dunois that Sir John Fastolfe, the hero of herrings, was engaged in like manner with himself, in transporting a second supply of provisions to his allies.

On the morning, then, of Wednesday, the 4th of May, De Poulengy brought Joan the joyful news that the convoy was approaching by way of Beauce. She was hurt at having no official notice of it sent direct from the chiefs, but immediately despatched him to La Hire to say she was ready to accompany him towards Beauce, to meet and guard the convoy. Soon all was busy and joyous preparation ; Father Pasquerel and the priests of Blois took the lead, like the priests of Jehoshaphat, who “went out *before the army*,”* and issued from the city directly the gates were thrown open ; and as on that former memorable occasion, so on this—not so much as a dog wagged his tongue against them. I am not romancing : I am putting together two incontestable historical

* 2 Chron. xx. 21.

facts. You may consult the Bible and Barante. Here was the Earl of Suffolk with some thousand men, declining to come out and cut off a few hundred, looking almost as inconsiderable as a flight of swallows, as they crossed the vast area and threaded their way between the bastilles. “Les Anglais ne bougèrent point.” A little while before, two hundred English had scattered at least eight hundred French; they tell it against themselves. What checked the English now? They had a vague awe of something supernatural they cared not to meet. So the little band cantered forward, vigilant but not afraid, and when they were clear of the bastilles and in sight of the dust caused by the flocks and herds, they laughed with joy and congratulated one another.

“Well,” said Dunois, riding gaily up to them, “here we are, and by way of Beauce!

Our redoubted foe, Sire Fascat, is similarly occupied for the English!"

"Dunois! Dunois!" cried Joan, eagerly, "I charge you, as you hope for heaven, to let me know of the approach of this Fascat! If you do not, I will have your head struck off."

He laughed, but promised she should know.

Great were the rejoicings in Orleans when the flocks, herds, waggons, and troops safely passed through the gates.

Encouraged by the inaction of the English, some men-at-arms and citizen-volunteers sallied out that afternoon, of their own accord, without consulting their chiefs, as was too much their practice, and penetrated as far as the bastille of St. Loup, one of the strongest forts on the north side of the river. The assault was fierce, but without any direction or method. They carried the first boulevard but were then driven off by superior numbers.

and compelled to take flight towards the town, some of them even entering it, and running through the streets.

Joan, knowing nothing of the sortie, had gone to the cathedral, and then home to her lodgings; and feeling tired with her morning's ride, she got D'Aulon to unarm her, and then went and lay down on her bed, Bouchier's wife remaining with her.

D'Aulon, feeling rather sleepy also, for the weather was now warm, and he had gone through a good deal during the last few days, thought he too would take a nap, and for that purpose disposed himself on a "couchette." He was just beginning to nod, when Joan suddenly started up in great agitation, and said—

"In the name of God, my council tells me that I must go out and meet the English; but I do not know whether I should go

to their bastilles or to meet Fescot. You must arm me at once.” On which, D’Aulon, rubbing his eyes, hastily began to obey her orders. At this moment a great uproar was heard in the streets, and a voice was heard to cry, “It is all going against us! the English are upon us!”

“Hear that!” cried Joan, “the blood of our people is flowing! Oh! why was not I summoned? This has been ill done. To arms! to arms! My horse!”*

Running down stairs, she found Louis de Contes at the door, amusing himself.

“You naughty boy!” cried she, angrily, “why did you not come and tell me that the blood of France was being shed? Quick, quick! my horse!”

Jeannot, who was better at deeds than

* Deposition of D’Aulon.

words, had already run off for it, and was now bringing it round.

“Now, my banner,” said she. “Run up for it, Louis.” And looking upward, she saw Bouchier’s wife at the window.

“Dear dame,” said she, “pray hand it me down.”

So Bouchier’s wife and Louis handed from the window the white banner, which Joan unfurled for herself, and then she immediately rode off towards the Porte Bourgogne, from whence the din of battle seemed to come. Just as she reached it, a citizen grievously wounded and bleeding profusely was carried by her.

“Ah!” exclaimed she, “such a sight as that makes my hair stand on end!”

Waving her banner aloft, she spurred onward into the very thick of the fight, her long hair streaming behind her; and directly she appeared, a loud cry arose of “The Maid! the

Maid!" At the same time, Dunois, who had been equally unwarmed of the fight, rushed to the scene of action. The current turned: the French, who were in full retreat, faced about, and made a second attack on the bastille of St. Loup, from which, unfortunately for the English, its captain, Sir Thomas Gerard, was accidentally absent. Talbot and other brave commanders hastened to the rescue; but look-outs were stationed on the church-towers, who informed the governor of every fresh reinforcement, which he accordingly met by additional succours, so that Talbot found himself faced by De Boussac, De Retz, the Sire de Graville, the Baron de Coulonges, and a crowd of chevaliers and squires, among whom, you may be sure, De Poulengey and De Metz were distinguished. Three hours the terrible contest raged; but at last the bastille was carried. Nearly :

the unfortunate Englishmen within it were put to the sword; a few saved themselves by putting on some church vestments they happened to find: no prisoners were made. Talbot drew off his troops in great mortification at the issue of the fight.

This is the Talbot, afterwards Earl of Shrewsbury, whom Shakspeare makes to say—

“ My thoughts are whirled like a potter’s wheel ;
I know not where I am, nor what I do :
A witch, by fear, not force, like Hannibal,
Drives back our troops, and conquers as she lists.”

And, to conclude,—

“ O, would I were to die with Salisbury !
The shame hereof will make me hide my head !”
[*Alarum. Retreat. Exeunt Talbot and his forces.*]

Our sympathies must follow him, in so far as he was a brave man.

Joan, returning victorious to the city, said, “ We must attack Suffolk to-morrow.”

“No, no, Joan,” said Dunois, “you must rest content for a while, with this brilliant success.”

“Ah!” said she, “to-morrow is Ascension Day; we will give it all to prayer; but on Friday we must attack Suffolk.”

And she spoke openly of her intention to do so, and said no man should follow her banner who had not previously confessed; so that the priests had a busy time of it on Holy Thursday.

In the morning, La Hire came to her.

“Joan,” said he, “a war-council is being held, and it is determined that to-morrow morning we shall attack the bastilles on the north, but only as a feint to cover an attack on the south bank, and endeavour to clear the road to the friendly province of Berri.”

“Ah!” said she, quickly, “you would not summon me to your council because you knew

I should say we must attack Suffolk on this side the river."

"I come to summon you to it now," replied La Hire, "and indeed, Joan, it is not customary to admit young girls to councils of war."

"Did I not turn the fortune of the day yesterday?" said she. "And was De Boussac the worse for coming by way of Beauce? Go to! you are but men. You know in whose name I conquer. I can do nothing of myself."

"However," said La Hire, earnestly, "you will not refuse, I hope, to come; nor to go out with us to-morrow?"

"No," said she, "I will not refuse, but you straiten the Lord's mercies. You would sooner bend His purpose to yours, than yours to His."

With this reluctant consent, La Hire was obliged to be satisfied.

On joining the council, they endeavoured to conceal the second part of the project from her, but she knew it already, and said with anger, "Tell me what you have settled; I can keep greater secrets than that, if need be." Dunois with great difficulty pacified her, but she reiterated her declaration that she would join none who did not first confess. She set the example herself, and received the communion.

CHAPTER III.

WE are going to have two days of hard fighting; and as this is less in my way than in Joan's, I shall do as she did coming from Vaucouleurs, and put myself under the conduct of two worthy gentlemen, who will bring me safe through the wood; and the foremost of these is Barante. The incidents are so romantic, the issue so singular, that I have little to do but to tread in his steps.

Coming events cast their shadow on La Hire, who thought that now, if ever, must be the time to pray, yet whose untutored soul knew little how to set about it. Looking

earnestly up, with fervour not irreverent, he exclaimed,—“ My God, do for me this day as I would do for Thee, if I were God, and Thou wast La Hire ! ”

Joan was greatly troubled that so many men had, on Wednesday, been sent to their last account unconfessed. De Poulengey, at her desire, made for her a third copy of her letter on Thursday, and she took it herself to the verge of the broken bridge, and had it shot across to Gladstone’s fort, calling out,—“ Read it ! ” A volley of abuse was her answer, and she was called names, which made her quickly say “ I’m not ! ”—and turn away in tears.

“ Ah, Saviour ! ” said she, “ you know they are nothing but lies.” *

At daybreak on Friday, she and the prin-

* “ Ah, Messire,” dit elle, “ le Roi des Cieux voit que ce ne sont que des mentiries ! ”

cipal chiefs crossed in a boat to a little island on the south side of the river. They placed two boats between it and the southern bank, to serve as a bridge. The English had four bastilles on this side—St. Jean le Blanc, the Augustines, the Tournelles, and St. Privé.

Their alarm on seeing the approach of Joan was so great, that, instead of disputing the passage, they forsook the bastille of St. Jean le Blanc, and retreated to the Augustines and the Tournelles.

The French captains, elated by this advantage, were actually willing to content themselves with it! The English, encouraged by seeing them return to the island, set up loud cries of derision, and abuse of Joan.

“Come,” said she to La Hire, “let us have a brush at these English;” and springing into a little boat with him, she and he drew their horses after them by their bridles. They

couched their lances, and rode full tilt at the soldiers, who scampered back into their bastilles. These two were joined by De Retz (*dict Bluebeard*), and others then quickly came across, and pushed on with them to the palisades of the bastille Augustine, every one trying to keep up with Joan.*

The Sire d'Aulon and a Spaniard named Partada had, meanwhile, been left in charge of the bridge of boats. A man-at-arms was hastening across it to join the rest, when they asked him to remain and help them to defend the boats.

“That would be doing nothing,” said he.

“It would be doing a good deal,” said Partada, “for it is very important the retreat should not be cut off. Other brave men think it worth looking to.”

* “C'était à qui marcherait le plus tôt avec la Pucelle.”

On a contemptuous reply from the man-at-arms, Partada felt his honour touched, and said, " See which of us will attack the bastille best." Taking each other by the hand, they raced off towards it, leaving poor D'Aulon in sole charge of the bridge. He set off after them, leaving the bridge to take care of itself. On reaching the palisade, he found a gigantic Englishman defending one of the passages. D'Aulon called up a famous master-gunner, a Lorrainer, named Maître Jean, who had been greatly wronged by the English during the course of the siege, and wanted to pay them off. Here was a good opening—" He settled this Englishman,"* and, at the first throw, left him dead on the earth. The Spaniard and his companion darted through

* "Il ajusta cet Anglais!" If the British Lion had but to paint this combat!—Perhaps he was not so very big, after all.

the passage, all the others after them—the bastille was carried by storm.

There was awful slaughter. Joan desired that the bastille should be burnt to the ground, that it might not again afford cover. She was wounded in the foot, and had fasted all day, because it was Friday; but they had the utmost difficulty in prevailing on her to return to the town for the night, and only on condition that they remained where they were.

Here was the day over, but the programme had not been carried out. The attack had been concentrated on the left bank; no sortie had been made on the right. When Joan found this the case, the council excused themselves by saying it would not have been prudent to endanger the city by weakening its garrison while the bastille was being attacked.

" You have your advisers," said she, " I have mine. You may depend upon this, that the word of the Lord will hold good, and the word of man will fail. Let us set to work early to-morrow,—I shall have a great deal to go through,—more than I have had yet, for I shall be wounded." *

The counsellors, whose strength was to sit still, put their heads together when she was gone, and agreed, that whatever she might intend, she should not cross the river the next day with the artillery and garrison. For this purpose, De Gaucourt undertook to keep the keys of the Porte Bourgogne, which she would seek to pass, and resolutely refuse to have it opened.

She made ready in the morning, and was preparing to start, when Jean Bouchier, her

* Barante.

host, who was cheapening fish at the door, said,—

“Joan, stay at home to-day, and we will have this shad for dinner.”

“Keep it for supper,” said she, gaily, “and I will return by way of the bridge, and bring an English prisoner to help eat it !”

She mounted and rode off, attended by her men-at-arms and a crowd of citizen volunteers. At the Porte Bourgogne was old Gaucourt, obstinately determined she should not go out.

“*At your peril ! at your peril !*” said he.

“You good-for-nothing man !” said Joan, “whether you will or no, we will pass ; and the men-at-arms shall win the day again, as they have done already.”

The soldiers and citizens pressed around him, with threatening, impatient faces ; and quite against his will, De Gaucourt found himself obliged to pull out the keys and

let them pass. At the same time, the citizens prepared to attack the Tournelles on the side of the broken arch ; though they did not actually do so till much later in the day.

The Bastille des Tournelles was now the only one left to the English on the south bank, for they had withdrawn the garrison of St. Privat ; but it was their strongest. One side, as we know, reared its massy, towering wall over the broken arch—on the land side, it was intrenched by a formidable bulwark, and deep fosse : and, in front of this fosse was a boulevard, which must be carried before the bastille could be reached by its assailants. Sir William Gladsdale and his five hundred knights, the flower of our chivalry, held the bastille, which was well supplied with artillery.

The attack began at ten o'clock, on the morning of Saturday, May 7th, exactly a

week from the day of Joan's arrival. It was led by herself, by Dunois, De Retz (recollect who he is), De Gaucourt, De Graville, De Gintry, De Villars, Du Chaillu, De Coaraze, D' Hilliers, De Thermes, De Gontaut, Admiral Coulant, La Hire, Saintrailles. Heavy odds for us. The English, says French Barante, defended themselves with a courage and hardihood that nothing could shake. They plied their assailants with cannon and showers of arrows; and when the French planted their scaling ladders, they attacked them with axes, mallets weighted with lead, and "guisarmes."

About eleven o'clock, Joan, who had never ceased encouraging the men on by telling them the time was at hand when the English would be discomfited, seeing that they were growing weary and relaxing their efforts, seized a ladder, planted it, and was beginning to ascend it, when an arrow shot her in

the neck, just above the shoulder, and went quite through, coming out at the other side. With an involuntary cry of pain, she dropped her hold, and fell into the ditch.

The English, in immense joy, began swarming down the wall to carry her off, when the Sire de Gamache—that knight who had rolled up his banner in anger when she would not yield to him in council—flew up to her, swinging his battle-axe aloft, and defended her single-handed. “Take my horse,” said he to her hastily. “*Sans rancune*, I was wrong to think ill of you.”

“*Sans rancune* you may truly say,” replied she, gratefully, “for I never saw knight acquit himself better.”

She was in too much pain, however, to mount his horse. De Poulengey carried her into the rear, and helped to unlace her armour—the arrow protruded half a foot

behind.* She began to cry; but on his whispering to her "Where are your voices?" she put her hands together and tearfully prayed. "Ah," said she, "I am consoled!"

Then, taking firm hold of the arrow with her right hand, she bravely drew it out. It made her feel very sick and faint; and made those wince who stood near her. A sympathising man-at-arms stepped up, and offered to pronounce a charm.

"I would rather die," said she, "than use any means not permitted by God. . . . I know," added she, after a little pause, "that I shall die some time or other, but I know neither how, nor when, nor where. If, therefore, you can, by any lawful means, heal my wound, I shall be glad."

D'Aulon applied some lard and oil to it,

* Barante.

which gave her ease. Meanwhile, the troops were universally discouraged by her fall, and the English of course in great glee. The trumpets sounded a retreat, and orders were given to draw off the artillery. Joan sent for Dunois.

"Wait, wait a little," said she. "In the name of God, have a little patience. The bastille will be ours presently. Let the men rest awhile, and eat and drink."

She then told D'Aulon to put on her armour again; but, instead of immediately remounting, she went into a deserted vineyard a little way off, and knelt down and prayed. This consoled and refreshed her.

Meanwhile, her famous banner lay at the edge of the fosse. D'Aulon, who had almost a superstitious reverence for it, got a servant of the Sire de Villars to join him in rescuing it from its dangerous and ignominious position.

Joan, from afar, caught a glimpse of its white folds, and, running up to them, joyfully took it in her hands and waved it. The French, supposing this a summons, resumed the attack with renewed ardour; while the English, who hoped they had effectually quieted her, were troubled to see her again in the field.

The citizens' attack from the bridge had now commenced; and cannon and culverins were playing on the Tournelles from the town. The English were getting short of powder. The men of Orleans, by the aid of a brave carpenter, were laying a beam across the broken arch, to bridge it over. Sir William Gladsdale thus found himself attacked on both sides.

"Has that girl more lives than one?" exclaimed he, passionately. "How now, sirrah?" to a pale-faced messenger from the bastille.

"Sir William, I scarce dare tell you, but

some of our men, bewildered, no doubt, by their fears, report having seen St Michael and St. Aignan, mounted on white horses, cheering on the foe."

"This passes patience!" cried Sir William.
"Bid the men mind their gunnery."

"I have also to tell you, Sir William, we are short of powder, and the citizens have bridged the chasm."

"That is indeed serious news," said Gladstone, his brow furrowing with deep care. "What, on earth, are our friends doing across the river? Will they look on and see us perish? We must, at any rate, sacrifice something, lest we lose all. Draw off the men from the boulevard, and let us make good our retreat into the Tournelles. There, we may perhaps hold out till Talbot and Scales come to the rescue. Ha! here is the girl close at hand! She speaks!"

“ Surrender ! surrender to the King of Heaven !” she cried, with thrilling distinctness.* “ Ah, Glacidas ! you bitterly wronged me with your tongue, but I am full of pity for your soul and the souls of your men.”

“ You canting witch !” cried he, almost mad with passion. “ Back, men, to the Tournelles, or our retreat will be cut off.”

As he spoke, he led the way to the drawbridge which connected the boulevard with the bastion. It crossed the second fosse, which was filled with running water from the Loire. A group of his best knights accompanied him, and the men-at-arms, French and English confusedly mixed, pressed on them from behind. At the very moment Sir William Gladysdale rushed across the drawbridge, followed by his companions, a cannon,

* “ Rens ti, rens ti au Roi des Cieulx !”

pointed under the direction of the Sire d'Aulon, crushed it beneath their feet, and the unfortunate men dropped into the stream. A wild roll of the eyes as Gladsdale fell, a confused cry of horror from many voices—the next instant, the eddying waters closed over them, and they were swept into eternity.

CHAPTER IV.

THE shock of this terrible event permitted the assailants to enter the Tournelles without renewing the combat: a fresh bridge was quickly formed of planks, and Joan triumphantly returned to the city, as she had said she would do, over the bridge. Orleans was frantic with joy.

Although the noblest commanders in France had assisted in the attack on the bastilles, it hailed her as if it had been solely her work. Indeed there can be no doubt that it was the superstitious dread of her power which acted as a spell on the English, and kept Suffolk and Talbot shut up in their forts. They did

not make the smallest attempt to succour Gladsdale, or attack the city while it was forsaken by its garrison. Of Sir William's five hundred men, three hundred were slain, and two hundred taken prisoners.

The bells of Orleans rang all night. *Te Deum* was sung in the cathedral. The people were beside themselves with joy. News of the success was sent to the king.

"This has been a pretty week's work," said De Metz to De Poulengey. "It is only the seventh day—three of which have been spent in praying."

"Not thereby lost, either," said De Poulengey.

During that night, and in hearing of the city's rejoicing, Suffolk assembled the English chiefs in council, and it was decided to raise the siege at once, but with no sign of fear or precipitation. At daybreak on Sunday

their forts and huts were in flames, and the troops drawn up in battle array before the city. Dunois and his brother captains were inclined to accept the defiance; but Joan, whose wound had kept her in bed, hearing of what was occurring, hastily rose, put on a light hauberk, and ran to the city gates. The French were already making ready for battle.

“For the love and honour of the holy Sabbath,” cried she, eagerly, “do not attack them first, nor provoke them. If it is the will and pleasure of God to give them the mind to go, let them do so. Only defend yourselves if they attack you, and then you will have the mastery.”

At her suggestion, Father Pasquerel and the other priests then brought an altar and a marble *bénitier* outside the city walls; hymns were sung, and two masses performed

in the open air, and in presence of the whole army. The English, with banners unfurled, were meanwhile retiring, slowly, in good order, and with dignity ; but they left behind them their sick, their wounded, and their baggage, provisions, artillery, and ammunition.

“Let them go, let them go,” said Joan ; “the Lord would not have us fight on His own holy day ; we shall have them some time or other.”

In spite of this, however, certain men-at-arms could not refrain from hanging on the rear of the retreating army, and they returned loaded with what they had picked up by the way, “whereof they made good cheer,” says Monstrelet, “for it cost them nothing.”

Afterwards, the citizens went out and razed the half-consumed bastilles to the ground, that they might never be used against them again.

The moral effect of the deliverance of Orleans was immense. Every one beheld in it a stupendous event: some traced it to Providence, others to the devil; but none could attribute it merely to human machinery, least of all to the force of mind of a simple girl.

Even to our own times, the anniversary of that day has been held sacred; and still, on the 8th of May, do the magistrates of Orleans walk in solemn procession round the ancient precincts of their city; *Te Deum* is sung in the cathedral, and a sermon is preached in commemoration of the Maid.

“What do you mean to do next?” was Dunois’ question to her.

“Can you ask?” said she. “I must have the king anointed at Rheims.”

“But Rheims is in the hands of the Burgundians.”

"No matter; the Lord will open a way before me. I shall not," said she, with a little sigh, "last out more than a year or so. I must therefore make the most of my time."*

To enforce this purpose, she took leave of her grateful friends at Orleans,† and journeyed safely and pleasantly to the king, who was now at Tours. That luxurious young monarch had received the good news with all the emotion he was capable of. He was very much struck, very glad; he said he was very thankful—we will hope he was so. Joan had a great opinion of his piety.

How her heart swelled with joy as she retraced her road! Her fixed idea had thus far accomplished itself, and she was confident

* "Je durerai qu'un an, ou guère plus; il me faut, donc, bien employer."—*Dép. de Duc d'Alençon.*

† "Qui tous plouroient de joye, et moult humblement la remercioient."—*Journal du Siège.*

of fulfilling the second. Would the king, would the country, reward her for breaking their yoke, by showing themselves worthy of their emancipation? Ah, they must look to that! She trusted in Heaven they would.

"De Poulengey," said De Metz, as they rode along together, "directly the English had walked off, a little foot-page of Rosaure's found his way to me, who had come all across country from her with a hamper, inscribed, 'This, for the head of Glacidas.'"

"That was very bloodthirsty of her," said De Poulengey.

"Why yes," said De Metz, "it was so; but I cannot help thinking it was only for a joke, and that the boy's real errand was to know how I fared. Indeed, on my giving him some sweetmeats, he told me as much; and said, that if evil were to befall me, he was sure his lady would cry her eyes out."

"That alters the case," said De Poulengey.
"What did you do?"

"I sent her a billet to this effect," replied De Metz: "'Glacidas is drowned, and swept out to sea, therefore I cannot by any possibility send you his head. I hope it will content you that the siege is raised, and the foe has retreated. I send you some very good English cheese that was found in their camp, with a cruse of their famous beer; and have filled up the hamper with Orleans plums of last year's growth, preserved by my hostess. She is very fond of sweet things,'" added De Metz, "so I know that will give her more pleasure than a copy of verses."

"I might have been quite in the wrong box," resumed De Metz, "had I been able to kill Glacidas, and had I actually sent her his head, for Rosaure is one of those eccentric characters that you never know whether to

take in sport or earnest; and ten to one, she would have burst into tears, called me a wretch, and refused ever to speak again to me. By the way, my friend, should you ever find me slain on the field, I beseech you to open my vest, and take from it a parchment. It contains my testamentary dispositions, which I had legally drawn up before I went into action, and I have felt much easier in my mind ever since, and advise you to do likewise; but as for telling Rosaure what I have done, nothing can be farther from my intentions, for I still consider her suggestion impertinent."

" You will both come right at last," said De Poulengey. " For my own part I am thankful for whatever chain of events has led us to share this short campaign together. Do you propose to go home now, or not?"

" Well," said De Metz, " I was not par-

ticularly inclined to turn out at first, having a very curious set of chess-men in hand, which I was carving in choice woods, but that appears mere child's play now, and I shall not willingly sheathe sword till the country is settled."

"You may fight all your life, then," said De Poulengey, smiling.

"So be it," said De Metz. "I accept the conditions."

Meanwhile, Dunois and the other chiefs who remained at Orleans, thinking they would show what they could do without the Maid, made a bold stroke for Jargeau—but just missed it! Dunois, in chagrin, followed Joan to Tours.

The king gave a cordial and gratifying welcome to those who had saved his city, and especially to Joan; but there was as usual much diversity of opinion in his council. Some were for attacking the English in Nor-

mandy, and driving them out of the kingdom. Joan maintained that the *sacre* must take place in the first instance, after which their dominance would melt away of itself.

Charles was debating the subject with his confessor, the Bishop of Castres, and Robert le Masson, Sire de Treves, who fully possessed his confidence, and had for some time been Chancellor of France, when a gentle tap was heard at the door. The king, guessing who it was, bade her come in, and Joan entering, knelt at his feet and said—

“Noble Dauphin, do not lose time in these long councils, but come and be anointed at Rheims.”

“Joan,” said the bishop, “let us hear in what manner your council, as you call it, speaks to you.”

“Yes, tell us,” said Charles.

“Ah,” said she, with a little embarrassment,

“you mean the voices that have spoken to me of your *sacre*. . . . Well, I will tell you. I was at prayer, in my accustomed manner, and complaining that you would not believe what I said. A voice then answered me in these words:—‘ Go, go, my child; I will be your aid; go !’ When I heard it, I rejoiced exceedingly, and would fain have heard it for ever !” saying which she looked upwards with a sweet but serious smile. Her hearers could not tell what to make of it.

The Duke of Alençon, having accomplished the payment of his ransom, now took the head of the army. The duchess, his wife, was uneasy for his safety. “ Fear nothing, madame,” said Joan to her, “ I will bring him to you again.” There were but twelve hundred lances; but, counting archers and coutilliers,* there were three thousand six

* *Coutillier*, a soldier whose weapon resembled a knife rather than a sword.—*Mills*.

hundred men. The Earl of Suffolk had thrown himself into Jargeau, and they were desirous yet fearful to attack him. Joan bade them have no fear.

"You will be supported from on high," said she. "If it were not so, I would sooner go home and keep my sheep."

About this time De Retz was joined by his nephews, Guy and André de Laval; the former of whom, an ardent, unsophisticated youth, to gratify the curiosity of his grandmother and mother concerning Joan, now commonly called the Maid of Orleans, wrote them the following letter :—

"My very redoubtable ladies and mothers,—After writing to you last Friday from St. Catherine de Fierbois, I went on Saturday to Loches, and, after vespers, visited the Dauphin, who is a fine little fellow, seven years of age. . . . On Sunday I proceeded to

St. Aignan, where the king was, and sent the Sire de Treves with my uncle to inquire after him, and let him know of my arrival, and ask when I should see him. He sent me word I might come as soon as I liked, and when I went, he received me very well; and though there were other persons present, he frequently returned to me to say something, observing that I had come to him in his need without being sent for, which he took very kindly. And when I replied that I had not brought as many men as I could have wished, he said he thanked me for those I had brought. The Sire de Treves told the Sire de La Chapelle that the king was much pleased with my brother and me, and had given no one a better reception. On the Monday I set out with the king to go to Selles, in Berri, four leagues from St. Aignan. And the king caused the Maid, who was already at Selles, to come out and meet him. She was completely armed

on all points excepting her head, and carried a lance, and she gave a hearty welcome to my brother and me. After we had dismounted at Selles, I went to see her at her lodging, and she had wine brought in for us, and told me she hoped soon to offer me some in Paris. It really seemed to me something divine, to look at her and to hear her. I saw her mount her fine black horse, armed all in white, save her head, with a little battle-axe in her hand ; and, turning herself about, towards the church, which was hard by, she cried, in a voice which was feminine enough,* ‘ You, priests and servants of the church, make processions and offer prayers to God !’—then turning about again, said, ‘ Now, forward ! forward !’ to her handsome page, who carried her standard.”

Here we have the brothers De Laval, the companions of the king and of Joan, and we

* “En assez voix de femme.”

know that their uncle had helped to guard the convoy and to storm the bastilles ; and artless young Guy, doubtless, looked up to Gilles as a mirror of chivalry, and thought what a lucky fellow he was to be master of unlimited power and wealth from the age of twenty, little guessing that the abuse of these gifts would make him the monster-hero of nursery tales, for at least four hundred years.

One would like to make a finished study of this gentleman, to see if he were quite as blue as he has been painted. That beard of his, to begin with ! Is it at all likely it was blue ? unless, indeed, his annoyance at seeing it turn prematurely grey (for he did not live to be old) made him try Hadji Baba's unfortunate experiment with—what were they ? logwood and copperas ?—a blue dye and a red, which were to produce an intense black, and that he found to his utter disgust, his beard *would not take the red !* Here, indeed, was he disfigured for

life, and by his own hand!—no mean mortification to a handsome and very conceited man. True, he might have made a clean shave of it, but, perhaps, he thought this still worse, and preferred spoilt looks and a soured temper—the eccentricities of which developed themselves in a slaughterous onset upon the weaker portion of the human race. Six wives, indeed? why, that would be no more than our King Harry had, and scarcely more than twice as many as he beheaded. Our Gilles had indeed but one wife (see how people exaggerate), and it would be quite gratuitous to suppose she did not die in her bed. Fie, fie! let me rather say (as I have been recommended to do) that “it has only been the losing sight of the proportion of words to things, that is to say truth, which has led us to form such one-sided opinions of a high-minded, strongly-willed man, favoured by nature with a gift only second in *position* to Absalom’s, and certainly

of irresistible attractive power with the softer sex ! The only fact seems to be that his standard of female excellence was rather in advance of his time, and that an over-refined mind thought death for himself or friends preferable to treachery and dishonour. Whether his mind, perhaps over stimulated by the violent exercise and coarse food of the period (for the body will retaliate on the mind, if not properly consulted, just as the mind will on the body), was in a fit state to weigh calmly the gossip and tittle-tattle he overheard, we can now, perhaps, scarcely judge ; but shall we therefore (while continuing to pity Othello) condemn a man whose memory has survived more than four centuries ? ” &c. &c.

In answer to this apologist for the hero of the blue chamber, I can only reply that Bluebeard’s crimes do not seem at all to have sprung from his jealousy of his wives, but rather from that wild profusion and utter

disregard for the claims of his vassals to common humanity, which, too generally displayed by the nobles of France, had reduced the lower orders to the utmost wretchedness. How else could De Barante have to relate such atrocities as were committed at Meaux, and tell us that when the poor complained to the rich, they were only mocked ? The nobles had deserved the severe chastisement of which the English were instruments ; for Gilles de Laval had many brothers in guilt, whose names are not so familiar to us.

He affected extravagant religion, this man ! —was followed, when he went about the country, by his principal chaplain (whom he insisted on calling a bishop), a dean, a chanter, two archdeacons, four vicars, a schoolmaster, twelve assistant chaplains, and eight choristers. “ Each one of these had his horse and his servant ; they were all dressed in robes of scarlet and furs, and had rich appoint-

ments. Chandeliers, censers, crosses, sacred vessels, in great quantity, and all of gold and silver, were transported with them, together with many organs, each carried by six men. He was exceedingly desirous that all the priests of his chapel should be entitled to wear the mitre, and he sent many embassies to Rome to obtain this privilege, but without success."

This must have been when his eccentricities were in full flower; at the date of this story, they were only in the bud. But his course was run out during the next eleven years. He was obliged first to borrow money, and then to sell many of his baronies. Inexhaustible as they seemed, he continued to want money. Then, when lawful means had failed, he called in the assistance of the black art, in which he undoubtedly believed, and this it was which made his name so abhorred throughout

his superstitious country. He took into his pay a certain physician of Poitou, and a Florentine named Prelati, who pretended to be able to recruit his exhausted treasures by sorcery. Their spells, they declared, must be written in human blood ; and, to obtain this, he put to death many innocent women and children ; yet, so fearful was he of the spirits they pretended to raise, that he would stand aside, reciting prayers to the Virgin, throughout their incantations, and quiet his conscience by vowing to go eventually to the Holy Land.

The general cry of the country rose up against him, and he was seized by order of the Bishop of Nantes and the Seneschal of Rennes. It is averred, that on his trial for sorcery, he admitted that he had caused upwards of eight score persons, of various ages, to be put to death. Some historians, however, allege, that reasons of state precipitated, if they did not occasion, his downfall ; and that

the Duke of Brittany was too well pleased with the opportunity of getting rid of a dangerous enemy, to examine very carefully into the truth of the articles preferred against him.

He was condemned to be hanged and strangled till he should be dead, and his body to be burnt. The sentence was executed at Nantes, on the 23rd of December, 1440, the Duke of Brittany himself attending at his execution. "Notwithstanding his many and horrid cruelties," says Monstrelet, "he made a very devout end, full of repentance, requesting most humbly of his Creator to have mercy on his manifold sins and wickednesses. When his body was partly burnt, some ladies and damsels of his family requested his remains of the duke, that they might inter them in holy ground, which he granted. The greater part of the nobles of Brittany, more especially those of his kindred,

were in the utmost grief and confusion at his disgraceful death." Such was their *esprit de corps*. "Before this event, he was much renowned as a most valiant knight at arms." *

Such was the end of Bluebeard. His castle, of course, is haunted to this day. "The building," says a modern traveller,† "must have been immense. A farm-house has been built within its walls, and the greater part of the area they enclosed is now cultivated; for the top of the rock is covered with a thick coat of earth. Enough, however, of the old building remains, not only for all the purposes of the landscape-painter, but to amuse the explorer and exercise the speculations of the antiquary. For those, too, who like to amuse their imaginations by fancying themselves in the hidden chambers which were

* Monstrelet, ch. 246.

† *Vide* T. A. Trollope's "Western France," vol. ii. p. 26.

the scenes of his incantations and abominations, there are abundance of subterranean chambers, strange holes, secret staircases, and hidden passages. As to the celebrated ‘blue chamber,’ in the absence of all positive information on the subject, I am induced to venture a conjecture that it was a certain miserable hole, beneath one of the towers still remaining, which seems to have been approachable only by a long, subterranean passage, which is entered from another tower. This opinion, however, is put forward with diffidence.

“As soon as the moon got up, I walked once more down into the beautiful valley, to enjoy the scenery by that peculiar light. All three of my landladies joined in entreating me not to think of going into or near the castle, assuring me that it was extremely dangerous; that nobody in Tiffauges would dream of going near the ruins after dark, for that

'il était impossible de dire ce qu'il pouvait y arriver.' Throughout the neighbourhood a thousand superstitions are current about the ruins of the dwelling of the murderer and necromancer. The hideous, half-burnt body of the monster himself, circled with flames, pale indeed, and faint in colour, but more lasting than those the hangman kindled around his mortal form in the meadow under the walls of Nantes, is seen on bright moonlight nights, standing now on one topmost point of craggy wall, now on another, and is heard mingling his moan with the sough of the night-wind. Pale, bloodless forms, too, of youthful growth and mien, the restless, unsepulchred ghosts of the unfortunates who perished in these dungeons unassailed, may, at similar times, be seen flitting backwards and forwards in numerous groups across the space enclosed by the ruined wall, with more than mortal speed, or glancing hurriedly from

window to window of the fabric, as still seeking to escape from its hateful confinement.

“Despite these terrors, with which their old tyrant still continues to torment the descendants of his former vassals, I enjoyed my moonlight stroll exceedingly. The dancing stream, the gray rocks on the side of the hill, lying half in shade, half silvered by the cold, pale rays, ghosts of the departed sunbeams, the ruins of the castle, exhibiting a thousand capricious changes of light and shade, were all well calculated to form a lovely moonlight scene.”

One cannot help hoping that the Poitevin physician and Florentine charlatan were brought to justice as well as their dupe. But we must return to the time when Gilles de Laval knew not as yet what was in his own heart and destiny.

CHAPTER V.

ON the 11th of June, the Duke d'Alençon with all the valiant chiefs who had defended Orleans, appeared before Jargeau. They found the English under the Earl of Suffolk, drawn out before the town in battle array, which they had not expected, and they had come up in disorder. Immediately attacked by the English, they were near sustaining a shameful defeat; but Joan, with her white banner, always in the van, drew them together and saved their honour. The English retired into the town.

Next morning, the artillery on both sides

came into play. The Duke d'Alençon advanced too forward. Joan cried to him that he was in danger from the English guns—he drew back: and, the next moment the Sire de Lude was killed on the very spot he had just quitted. It is not surprising that the Duke, who had always been one of Joan's sincerest believers, had now more trust in her than ever.

They had need to be quick, if they meant to take Jargeau, for Sir John Fastolfe was expected there, with succours from the Duke of Bedford. On the third day they made a breach in the walls. Lord Suffolk then parleyed and offered to surrender in fifteen days, if he was not relieved within that time. He was told, in reply, that he could only march out with his men and horses.

“Otherwise, they will be taken by assault,” added Joan.

In fact, it was what they had to attempt.

“Forward, gentle duke! to the assault!”
she cried.

He was for waiting a little.

“Have no fear,” replied she, “the hour is come when it pleases God to give you the town: you have nothing to do but to take it. Ah, gentle duke! are you afraid? Did I not promise your duchess to bring you home safe and sound?”*

The assault began: the men-at-arms threw themselves into the fosse and began planting their ladders; but the English defended themselves so well that the contest was terrible. It lasted four hours. Suffolk cried aloud that he wished to parley with the Duke, but they would not hear him. Joan, grasping her standard with one hand, began to scale

* Deposition of the Duke d'Alençon.

a ladder with another, but was hurled into the fosse by a heavy stone. They thought it must have killed her, but she instantly recovered herself.

“Pooh, pooh!” said she, “the day, my friends, is ours.”

In fact, the town was almost immediately afterwards taken by storm, and the defenders chased through the streets and pursued into the houses. Lord Suffolk had the grief of witnessing the death of his brother, Alexander de la Pole, and was himself taken prisoner by a man-at-arms.

“Are you a gentleman?” said the Earl.

“Yes,” replied his captor, “I am a squire of Auvergne—my name is William Regnault.”

“Kneel then, and I will knight you,” said the Earl. “It shall never be said I yielded myself prisoner to a common man.”

The victors returned in triumph to Orleans,

where reinforcements poured in, nobles heading their vassals, and poor men who could provide no better equipment coming in their leather jackets, armed with knives or bows and arrows, and mounted on ponies. The brothers De Laval, the Count de la Tour d'Auvergne, and many others, were there.

They marched at once to Mehun-sur-Loire, took the bridge, and leaving Sir Thomas Scales in possession of the castle, proceeded to Beaugency, which was held by Lord Talbot, who, now that Suffolk was prisoner, had succeeded to the chief command. This is the Talbot of whom Shakspeare says—

“A stouter champion never handled sword;”

and though we have not yet seen him do much to the purpose, doubtless it was no false boast our Shakspeare put into his mouth :—

“This arm, that hath reclaim'd
To your obedience fifty fortresses,
Twelve cities, and seven walled towns of strength,
Besides five hundred prisoners of esteem.”

On the present occasion, Lord Talbot seems to have felt his old fear of the Maid: he left a garrison in the citadel, and hurried to meet Fastolfe and bring him to the rescue.

D'Alençon sat down before Beaugency, and news was presently brought him that Arthur, Count de Richemont, Lord High Constable of France, was coming up with four hundred lances and eight hundred archers. Now, the Count de Richemont had had “some words” with the king's favourite, La Tremouille, and had kept away from court. Joan, supposing him therefore disaffected, did not look on this as an amicable approach, and was for going out armed against him. La Hire and others, however, set

themselves quite in opposition to this, and warned her that if she and the Duke went out against him, they might find there were those who would sooner stick to the Constable than to any girl in the kingdom.

The matter was settled by the report of Lord Talbot's approach.

"Oh," said Joan, "we must not quarrel among ourselves, but make common cause against the foe."

Several chiefs guaranteed the loyalty of the Constable, and it was agreed to accept him and his reinforcements in good part.

Next morning, therefore, Joan, on horseback, accompanied by D'Alençon, Dunois, Gilles de Laval, and others, went to meet and welcome him. Each alighted, and Joan knelt to do him homage.

"Joan," said the Constable, "I am told that you wished to fight me. I know not

whether you derive your commission from God or not. All I can say is, that if you do, I have no reason to fear you, and if you are a tool of the devil, I have still less."

In fact there was no one who waged more bitter war against sorcery than he did : and heretics were equally odious to him. The instant they were discovered, whether in Brittany or Poitou, burn they must—he had no mercy on them.

It was the custom, then, for the newest comer to keep the watch the first night ; and certes, says Barante, this was the first time that watch was ever kept by a Constable of France.

The castle of Beaugency could not hold out against such formidable odds : the garrison therefore honourably surrendered ; and marched out, each man with his horse, his armour, and the sum of one mark.

Talbot and Scales, being unable to save Beaugency, tried to recover the bridge at Mehun, but, hearing the French were coming up, retreated into the district of Beauce, and were joined by Fastolfe with four thousand men.

This conjunction made the French chiefs feel how very valuable an accession was De Richemont to their force.

"Ah, Lord Constable!" said Joan, "you did not think to help me, but you are well come, for all that."

The Duke d'Alençon asked her what she thought it best to do. The troops, remembering Agincourt and the "battle of the herrings," and knowing the skill with which the English drew out their armies, were unwilling to meet them.

"Have your horsemen good spurs?" said Joan.

"What!" said he, "do you mean us to set them to our horses, and make off?"

"No," replied she, "you will want them to pursue the English."

Her intrepidity inspired them, and it was resolved to march across Beauce towards Janville. She animated them all. "Depend on it," said she, "we shall give a good account of them. If they were even hanging from the clouds, we would have them down; for they are given us to punish. The gentle king will this day have his greatest victory won for him, for my council have told me they are on our side."

The Constable sent forward his standard, and they all followed it. The vanguard, consisting of the best mounted *gens d'armes*, was commanded by La Hire, Saintrailles, De Lorè, De Beaumanoir, and others. Joan wished to have led it; but they begged her to

remain with the Duke d'Alençon, Dunois, the Constable, the Admiral, De Boussac, Gilles de Laval, D'Albret, and De Gaucourt.

La Beauce is a corn district, the principal granary of Paris. Large, open wheat-fields, with a very little proportion of pasture and meadow-ground, stretch away in every direction ; and the cover is very inconsiderable, though one or two small bits of forest may be distinguished here and there. La Hire and his vanguard went caracolling over these plains, intending to engage the English as soon as they should espy them, without giving them time to form ; and one of the aforesaid thickets—which might have abounded then more than they do now—favoured this design, by keeping them concealed from one another till they were close.

A stag sprang from a thicket, near Patay, just as La Hire passed it with sixty or eighty

men, and was followed with cheers and laughter by some English soldiers who had started it. The news that the French were close upon them was hastily carried to Talbot and Fastolfe, the former of whom was for an immediate engagement, while the latter was for retreat. The French were upon them at a gallop before they were in accord, and the battle was a short one. Sir John took to flight; while brave old Talbot, setting his life at nothing, fought obstinately, but was taken prisoner, as were Scales, Hungerford, and many another gallant leader.

“Well, my Lord Talbot, you did not expect this, this morning,” said D’Alençon, not very feelingly.

“It is the fortune of war,” said Talbot, with calmness.

Michelet takes part with Sir Falstaff, as he calls him, and says, “Il disait, en homme

sage, qu'avec une armée découragée, il fallait rester sur la défensive.” But a Knight of the Garter was not to mind fearful odds, and therefore Sir John was deprived of his order ; and Shakspeare represents Talbot tearing the garter from his leg, and then appealing to young King Henry, and saying—

“ Pardon me, princely Henry and the rest :
This dastard, at the battle of Patay,
When but in all I was six thousand strong,
And that the French were almost ten to one,—
Before we met, or that a stroke was given,
Like to a trusty squire, did run away ;
In which assault we lost twelve hundred men ;
Myself, and divers gentlemen beside,
Were there surpris'd and taken prisoners.
Then judge, great lords, if I have done amiss
Or whether that such cowards ought to wear
This ornament of knighthood, yea, or no.

Gloster. To say the truth, this fact was infamous.”

The garter was in reality taken from Fastolfe by the Duke of Bedford, who was waiting at

Corbeil in hopes of the news of a victory, and who was in a rage when Sir John arrived there, a fugitive, without knowing how matters were going. Eventually, the garter was restored to him.

This battle was fought on the 28th of June. The slaughter was terrible, and the French men-at-arms were guilty of great cruelty. Joan could not endure this. Seeing a Frenchman strike his prisoner to the ground, covered with blood—

“Non scese, no! precipito da sella,”

raised the poor man in her arms, called for a priest to confess him, and meanwhile soothed and sustained him.

The loss of this battle greatly troubled the English. Those who escaped from it, fled to Paris, crying that the Armagnacs were coming. King Henry's council assembled in

consternation ; the city defences were strengthened, the watch augmented, and the Duke of Bedford wrote pressingly to England for reinforcements.

“ Everything went well here,” he wrote, “ till the siege of Orleans was undertaken, Heaven knows in what evil hour ! After the death of my cousin Salisbury, whom God absolve, and whose loss seemed a Divine judgment, your troops, which were before the city in great number, received a terrible check. This was chiefly occasioned by the extraordinary confidence of our enemies in a girl who is a limb of Satan, wholly given to witchcraft and sorcery, whom they call the Maid. This defeat has not only diminished the number of your troops, but has inexpressibly depressed those who remain to us. It also encourages the enemy to draw together in great force.”

In fact, it was the cue of the English chiefs

to speak of Joan as under Satanic influence, though there was nothing that could be discovered in her life and conversation inconsistent with the utmost purity and holiness. Moreover, it did not encourage the English soldiers much to think they were fighting against the devil, which is sufficiently difficult in a private capacity, so that their chiefs knew not what to do.

CHAPTER VI.

“ **Y**OU may say what you will, father,” said Zabillet, very positively, “ but go I must and I will, and, this time, not without you.”

Poor Zabillet’s heart had so yearned for her daughter, after Jeannot and Pierre had joined her, that she had been unable to resist starting off with Jacquemin, and, after all sorts of misadventures by the way, had reached Le Puy.* How the poor woman came to overshoot her mark, and stray so far south, we

* “ Isabelle d’Arc quitta Domremy peu de temps après sa fille, et elle était au Puy pendant qu’ on préparait l’expédition d’Orléans.”—*Procès*, ii. 74.

know not. Her heart was full of woe and her body oppressed with weariness, when she entered that ancient town, just in time to be well-nigh stunned with the amazing news that the siege of Orleans was raised, and by her daughter Joan! Poor woman ! she almost died of joy, and could scarcely, for tears, witness the transporting ovation to her child. Finding how she had overshot the mark, her impulse was not to thrust herself into Joan's presence in the midst of the court, but to hasten back to her cottage, and rejoice with her husband.

Jacques had had a miserable time of it in her absence ; but he, too, had learnt the wonderful tidings, which Durand Laxart had brought him ; and though, as he said, this wild-goose chase of Joan's had upset the peace and comfort of the whole family, his fatherly heart glowed with pride and pleasure at her success.

And now Joan had sent Pierre to them, to summon them to witness the *sacre*.

"You may say what you will, father," said Zabillet, with determination, "but go I must and I will, and, this time, not without you. Here has our girl saved king and country, and here is she about to set the golden crown upon his head, and are you and I not to be by? When, I pray you, have we had a holiday together, since we danced beneath the Fairies' Tree before we were married?"

Jacques here muttered something that sounded like an inquiry, what was to become of the house?

"As if the house could not for once take care of itself!" cried Zabillet, "even if Jacquemin persists not in his silly declaration that he does not care to go! And Tiphanie has promised to look after the animals."

"Aye, aye," said good-natured Tiphanie, "neither hen nor chicken, cat nor magpie,

shall be the worse for your absence. Right glad should I be to go with you, and see Jeannette in her glory. Give her my dear love, and tell her I long to see her again."

"Ah, gossip, if you do so, what must I do?" said poor Zabillet, with a tear in her eye. "I miss her at every turn, I can tell you!—not but what Haumette is very good, and tries to supply her place."

"There is nothing very good in my doing that, mother," said Haumette, cheerfully. "Were not Joan and I always like sisters? I only regret that I used to disbelieve in her wonderful dreams. Tell her so for me, will you, mother?—but no; we shall soon have her among us again, and then I can tell her myself."

"What if she should never return to us?" said Tiphanie, looking very mysterious. "Some great lord may take a fancy to her."

"I have no desire to have a lord for my son-in-law," said Zabillet, with decision. "Not an' 'twere the Lord High Constable himself. Dukes, constables, and admirals, are not for such as we ; and if they were to come here, I should not know how to entertain them. Pierre says they all behave to Joan like so many brothers, none of them like lovers, and I am all the better pleased. As for Pierre himself, I never saw a boy so improved ; his cheeks are as red as beetroot, and his shoulders as flat as this table. As for his tongue, you should hear it!"

"Mother, thou wilt let no one's tongue be heard but thine own," interposed Jacques. "If go we must——"

"Oh, I am glad you are coming round, you dear man !"

"Nonsense," said he, smiling a little, as she laid her brown hand affectionately on his

shoulder,—“ I was going to say, that, since go we must, Dagobert must be shod, and the hole in the old saddle mended, where the stuffing oozes out.”

“ And I’ll plait his mane and tail, and tie them with tawdry ribands,” said Tiphanie. “ See, here comes Durand Laxart to hear the news !”

“ Ah ! where there’s plenty of honey, there’s sure to be flies,” said Zabillet, smiling, as she went to meet her brother.

“ You’re surprised to see me, I dare say,” began he.

“ Not a whit, not a whit,” returned Zabillet.

“ But,” continued Laxart, “ as I was passing through our market-place (it’s corn-market day, you know, at Vaucouleurs), who should I see but your son Pierre,—as grand as a king !—I never was more surprised in my life !—‘ Why, Pierre,’ said I, ‘ is that you ?’

You may imagine how surprised I was. So then he told me all about everything, the bastilles and all—he has it all pat, bless you ! And very well he expressed himself. As for Joan—Oh, wonderful ! There were plenty glad to hear him, as you may suppose ; one of Sir Robert's men was there, among the rest, and I think he went home and told Sir Robert and his lady ; for by-and-by he returned, when Pierre was gone, and inquired for the young man.”

“ Ah,” said Zabillet, complacently, “ the boy went over there to get something done to his bridle, he said, but I guessed it was only to show himself and his fine clothes in the market-place.”

“ So,” continued Laxart, “ I stepped forward, and said the young man was gone ; would the old one do as well ? He said he thought not ; but, however, I went along

with him, and he took me in to my lady, who certainly was as well set out as any lady you ever saw, or could suppose. Her head-dress was just like the moon in its first quarter, studded with stars, and her shoes had points long enough to run into you and kill you dead. However, the sum of it was, that her lacquey had told her your son had come back to fetch you to court, and she wanted to know whether you had anything fit to go in; not to disgrace the manners and fashions of your native place, and make royalty think we did not know what was what at Vaucouleurs. So, not to be behind her ladyship in upholding ourselves, I said, I had no doubt you had everything proper, unless it might be in the matter of a hood. So she said she had a hood that would suit you, which, for some reason I have forgotten, she had scarcely worn —probably because it would not cover those

horns, which exceeded those of any ox I ever saw at market—and here it is in this bag.” Saying which, Durand Laxart suddenly brought to the ground from his shoulder a sack that would have held two bushels, and diving his arm down to the bottom of it, fished up a scarlet cloth hood.

“ Well, this is kind indeed of you, brother,” said Zabillet; “ and very genteel of her ladyship.”

“ Put it on,” said Durand, “ and let us see how you look in it.”

“ No, no ; I will try it on Haumette,” said Zabillet, “ and then I shall see for myself.”

So she put it over the sleek black locks of the smiling girl, whose white teeth and rosy cheeks became it well enough.

“ Either she sets off the hood, or the hood sets her off,” said Laxart, admiringly, “ for I doubt if the queen herself looks better.”

"Now, you," said Haumette, slipping it off, and tapping Zabillet with it. The good woman looked quite sheepish, and insisted on its being tried on by Tiphanie, who made not the smallest objection.

"Well, certainly, I never thought when I got up this morning," said Zabillet, "that the governor's lady would send me a hood before night. Those grand people at a distance are nothing to me, but it is gratifying to be made much of in one's own native place. Turn yourself completely round, Tiphanie:—yes, I like the effect;—and now I want nothing but a grass-green gown to wear with it."

"Will not that be a very expensive colour?" suggested Haumette.

"Not at all too expensive for the occasion," replied Zabillet. "Jacques has given me the money for the calves, to buy what I like with; and as I am supplied with a hood, I can spend

the more on a gown. Goodness! how surprised Joan will be when she sees me come up the street!"

"I see you will have to go home with me, sister," said Laxart, smiling, "to buy the gown at Vaucouleurs; unless, indeed, you prefer Neufchâteau or Toul."

"I think nothing of the shops at either of those places," said Zabillet, "and shall prefer buying my gown where I am known. One may as well give old friends a turn, and circulate a little money in one's own neighbourhood. It is what the prosperous owe those who are less fortunate. I never was abject in my poverty, and I am not going to be haughty in my prosperity. But, tell me now, brother, is not this wonderful about Joan?"

"What are you calling wonderful?" replied he. "I don't know what you are referring to."

“ Why, is it not wonderful that her dreams should have come true? Was not it quite out of the course of nature ? ”

“ What the course of nature may be under certain circumstances,” replied he, “ may be more than you or I can rightly determine. Who has ever fathomed the mystery of dreams? I much question whether any one has done so; and, as for the course of nature, what signifies it to call that by any other name than the will of God ? ”

“ Ah ! that’s what I say,” rejoined Zabillet; who, however, had never said anything approaching to it. “ And, by the way, brother, should not you like to go with us ? ”

“ Who ? I ? ” said old Laxart, a curious smile of pleasure coming over his withered features. “ Why, to be sure I should like it beyond anything that can be conceived on this side heaven ; but I never contemplated

it till this moment, and why should you suggest it? No, no; I'm too old to go a-sight-seeing."

"Not a bit of it," said Jacques, at that moment coming in with the old saddle; "you're younger than I am, and quite as equal to a trifle of fifty or sixty miles—ha, ha, ha!"

And the old fellows laughed in concert, and shook one another's hands.

"Jean Morel has already started off," added Jacques, "to see her pass through Chalons."

"Come, uncle, go," said Haumette, coaxingly. She was no niece of his, nor did she murmur, for a moment, that she must remain behind; but that was her nature.

"What! *you* too?" said he, as if he were quite overpowered by their importunities. "Well, well, since you all want it, and since

Joan, the baggage, may not be sorry to see me, I must get my wife's consent if I can; though where on earth to look for a horse——”

As there were plenty of horses to be had for the looking for, they knew that all real obstacles had been overcome; so they hastened their preparations in excellent spirits. It really was a considerable journey for them to undertake; but they were not in the least discouraged by it, with Pierre for their guide. That young gentleman's experience during the last two or three months had been such as to ripen his faculties pretty quickly. According to his own account, he was equal to anything, surprised at nothing, frightened at nothing. Besides, Zabillet had considered herself an experienced traveller since her journey to Le Puy—though her husband and brother declared she should not

be their guide, lest she should take them there again.

So off they started for Rheims in high glee : Dagobert quite a spectacle in his tassels, tufts, fringes, cockades, streamers, and leatheren trappings embossed with polished brass, and looking quite knowing, the old fellow, in his finery, with a homely dignity in his tread, and a twinkle of humour in his one eye ; Zabillet riding behind her husband, and tightly clasping his old body, while her scarlet hood perpetually flapped over her face and extinguished her eyes ; Durand Laxart, on a high-stepping white horse, not born yesterday, with thick ankles and a very aquiline nose, such as one may see in Wouvermanns' pictures, looked as serious as if he were going to be the king's champion and defy all England ; while Pierre, light-hearted, agile, and well mounted, the only sprig of youth in the bunch, cara-

coled hither and thither, going over a good deal more ground at first than he need have done, like a little dog at a fair.

Haumette watched them out of sight, and then turned into her cottage, and cried bitterly, after which she wiped her eyes and wondered what could have upset her.

The magpie unconcernedly hopped hither and thither, pertly calling “Jeannette! Jeannette!” but Hardigras set up a most dismal howl, which had an ominous effect; and Jacquemin, who, for once in his life felt peevish and dissatisfied, gave him a kick to howl for.

CHAPTER VII.

2nd Gent. You saw
The ceremony ?
3rd Gent. That I did.
1st Gent. How was it ?
3rd Gent. Well worth the seeing.
 Such a noise arose
As the shrouds make at sea in a stiff tempest,
As loud, and to as many tunes.

King Henry VIII.

WHILE our rural friends were jogging across the wide plains of Champagne towards Rheims, Charles and his chivalrous train were approaching by a different route that ancient city, which is crowned by one of the most majestic cathedrals in the world. We can point to stupendous works of science

in this our day, and have no need to lower our colours to those of the fifteenth century ; but, somehow, we cannot produce such works as the tombs of the Dukes of Burgundy, the vast chimney-piece in the town-hall of Dijon, and the cathedral at Rheims.

As the royal cavalcade advanced, various disaffected towns and castles opened their gates and surrendered their keys. As for Rheims, it had promised to be faithful till death to King Henry and the Duke of Burgundy. Nevertheless, its keys were sent to Charles, with promises of submission ; and just before he made his public entry, he was joined by his young brother-in-law, René of Anjou, Duke of Barr, at the head of a considerable body of troops.

This amiable young prince, whose merits deserve at least a passing notice, was the second son of Louis, Duke of Anjou and titular King of Naples, and Queen Yolante.

Deprived of his father at nine years old, his abilities, sweet disposition, and love of study, gained him the affection of his uncle, the Cardinal Duke of Barr, who made him his heir, and let him assume his title even during his own life. To end the feuds between the contiguous duchies of Barr and Lorraine, he married René, when only eleven years old, to Isabella, the daughter and heiress of Charles, Duke of Lorraine, and as they grew up, the union of these young people was eminently happy. Duke Charles's nephew, the Count de Vaudemont, was disposed to dispute the succession with his cousin, which led to a war, in which René distinguished himself. "A bold and daring warrior, he has been stigmatised as a lover of inglorious ease; the promoter of manufacturing and agricultural invention and improvement, the patron of public education, and the author of a new system of jurisprudence, he has been held

forth as a mere artist of fair talent, or a builder of troubadour rhymes.”*

This gallant and cultivated young duke could no longer endure to remain blockading the stronghold of a rebel count, when his favourite sister’s husband was going to be crowned at Rheims, and he therefore hastened to join him.

Was that sister here? No, she was not. Mary of Anjou, desirous of participating in the coronation, had advanced as far as Gien to join her husband, but was then (doubtless at the suggestion of La Tremouille) persuaded to return to Bourges.

Charles made his public entry into the city on Friday, the 15th† of July, 1429, and was received by the archbishop and a goodly number

* The Hon. Edmund Phipps’s Introduction to “King René’s Daughter.”

† Barante.

of citizens, who shouted “Noël!” and escorted him to the archbishop’s palace. Joan led the way, preceded by her white banner, and on either side of her rode Dunois and La Hire.

Next came the trumpets, heralds, and guards; then the king, attended by the dukes of Alençon and Barr, and a noble train of chivalry; then the household troops and men-at-arms, and a long array of seigneurs and their vassals.

Jacques, Zabillet, and Laxart had entered the town in a different direction; and Pierre, placing them where he told them they could see everything, hastened off to join the *cortége*. Lodgings had been provided for the family at the inn of the Zebra, facing the cathedral, and kept by Allix, widow of Raoulin Morian, who afterwards received from the town-council twenty-four *livres parisis* for their entertainment. A marble tablet, in front of the

"Maison Rouge," which now stands on the site of the Zebra, bears this inscription,—"In this hostelry, then called the Zebra, A.D. 1429, the father and mother of Jeanne d'Arc* were lodged and boarded at the expense of the town-council."

As Joan led the procession through quaint old streets, draped and garlanded with hangings and flower-wreaths of every imaginable colour, where every coigne of vantage, above and below, was crowded with spectators, so that—

"You would have thought the very windows spake,
So many greedy eyes of young and old
Through casements darted their desiring eyes,"

who should she see, perched on a door-step, with smiles extending from ear to ear, and

* We must now consider this the time-sanctioned orthography.

eyes glazed with troublesome tears that would come when they were not wanted, but her dear old father, with his weather-beaten cheeks, and tall, sinewy figure; her darling mother, in grass-green gown and scarlet hood, actually devouring her with her eyes; and that beloved old uncle, who had always believed in her, and who had supplied her with a horse, and without whose support and co-operation she could never have set forth. Oh, there was nothing wanting to crown her joy but this! She gave a delighted cry of recognition, which made Dunois and La Hire look round and smile, and then inevitably passed on.

“She sees us! She sees us! She saw us!” exclaimed the exultant Zabillet. “Oh, father, what a moment for us! Could not you now die happy?”

“Die? no, I want to live,” replied he, greatly elated, “to see my girl in all her glory,

and then lay it aside again, and come home thankful and content to our cottage. Please God, she soon will! Meantime, look, Zabillet, at the king! On my faith, a sightly young gentleman!"

"Count Dunois was worth a dozen of him, though," said Laxart, in an earnest undertone. "Did you mark him at our girl's bridle? He was sightly and knightly too, and looked a deal fitter to be king than this one."

"Hush, hush!" whispered Jacques, "that's treason, I believe."

"It's true, though," muttered the other.

"I don't care a bit for all these men with arquebusses," said Zabillet, "this was a good place for the moment, but now there is nothing to see, and we are getting quite at the end of the mob. Let us push on, father, and get ahead of her. I want to see Joan come in sight a dozen times."

"You are very well off, mother, where you are," said Jacques, with a true countryman's hesitation to make his way through a crowd; "we can never work through them."

"Trust me for that," said Zabillet, jumping down from her perch upon his toes with all her weight, "only you follow me."

"She'll get lost," said Jacques desperately to Laxart; and the two men immediately pursued her as she made her way, by the vigorous use of her elbows and shoulders.

"Gently, dame," said some one, who felt uncivilly used.

"It's very well to say gently," rejoined Zabillet, "but I want to pass."

"But other people want to see as well as you, and you must not drive at them in that manner. One can see you are country bred."

"Country bred!" cried Zabillet, indignantly, "why, I'm the mother of Joan Darc!"

She was only answered by a laugh of incredulous derision.

“ Oh my goodness, father ! ” cried Zabillet, ready to weep, “ if she hasn’t put her foot right through my green gown ; such a nasty tear all across the stuff ! ”

“ Well, and served you right for pushing so,” said he, gruffly ; “ just now, you came down with both your feet on my toes.”

“ People look for accidents like these in great assemblages,” placidly observed Durand, who had never been in a great assemblage before in his life. “ My counsel is that we should slip quietly round by the back streets and get ahead of the people, as I do at Vaucouleurs on cattle days.”

“ Aye, that’s a good thought, brother,” said Zabillet. So they turned down an alley, and speedily found themselves in a city of the dead.

“ Can you tell me the way to find the king,

my dear?" said Zabillet, to a little boy who seemed running for his life.

"Down La Truie qui File, I dare say," said he, waving his arm in the opposite direction, and rushing off.

"Down La Truie qui File?" repeated Zabillet, distrustfully. "I don't believe there is or can be a street with such a name; who ever heard of a sow at needlework? I believe he was a very naughty boy, who only wanted to get quit of us."

"We have but to follow our ears," said Jacques, "for the noise of the trumpets and the cries of the people tell us their whereabouts."

"Oh, do let us push on, then!" cried Zabillet, desperately plunging down a passage as a fresh flourish of trumpets sounded provokingly near at hand. Delightful to relate, she actually hit the right mark, and came out bolt

upon Joan, who was so astounded at the unexpected *rencontre*, that she could not help laughing, and then found herself blinded by irrepressible tears.

“She saw me ! she saw me !” cried Zabillet, delightedly returning to her companions.

“Did ~~she~~ ? dear heart !” said Durand, with simplicity. “I was just looking into this oyster-shop. Do see what very fine oysters ! There is fried fish, too ; and absolutely I feel as if I could peck a little.”

Zabillet was meditating another rush ; but just then people came pouring down the alley, shoving her about very unceremoniously, and one of them cried to another, “All is over ; she is gone into the archbishop’s palace, and do you know, I think her no beauty after all.”

“Handsome is that handsome does,” muttered Zabillet, indignantly. “I never set up

Joan for a beauty, nor is it her beauty that has saved king and kingdom ; but yet she is as well-made a girl as any in France, and has as bright an eye, as white teeth, and as clear and wholesome a complexion. A fig for your fine, stuck-up ladies ! and since it's your fancy, brother, to try a bit of the Rheims fish, I have no objection, since we have ridden so far, fasting : I will only remind you that we may as well inquire our way afterwards to the Striped Ass, where the authorities will feed us for nothing.”

Saying which she bent her head under the doorway of a fish-stall of very moderate pretensions, where a cheap and modest repast was partaken of by the whole party with very good appetite, Zabillet being in the utmost glee at the astonishment of the fishmonger's wife when she said to her, “ Only think ! I'm the mother of Joan Darc !”

On the receipt of this extraordinary intelligence, the fishmonger and his wife were as gracious as could be, and the fishmonger volunteered to show them the Zebra, which he did, talking and asking questions all the way. Jacques was just beginning to say, "Mother, what a splendid cathedral!" when Zabillet exclaimed, "There's my girl!" and darted into the Zebra. Oh, what a happy meeting it was! There was plenty of revelry and rejoicing that night in the town, but no happier family-party in it than in the Zebra.

The better the day the better the deed, is always the excuse on the Continent for having high solemnities upon a Sunday; so of course on that day the *sacre* was to take place. Meanwhile there were plenty of preparations to be hastily made, and the sound of saw and hammer, hatchet and chisel, filled every pause in the universal hum. The town was as full as

it could cram, and the municipality exercised a noble hospitality. Joan would fain have spent much time with her parents, but she hoped soon to be with them entirely, and meanwhile had a last great public duty to perform ; so that Zabillet, who would jealously have appropriated her whole time, and carried her all over Rheims to buy cheap pennyworths, and look at things she could not afford and did not want, found her claimed by other and higher authorities. She was disposed to murmur at this, but was reminded by Jacques that it was the unavoidable consequence of Joan's greatness ; and to pacify her he went about with her himself, buying all sorts of things to stow into Durand's capacious saddle-bag, which was no other than the sack in which he had carried the hood.

Simple old Laxart strayed about a good deal by himself, sometimes losing his way, but

eventually finding it again. He was tickled by the odd names of the streets, would chat with any one who would speak to him, and also talked a good deal to himself, in a dreamy, unconscious way, generally ending with a jerk of his chin and "Well, well!" He also found his way into the churches whenever there was service, and would satiate himself by beholding Joan at her devotions from some distant corner, and noting the reverence with which every one treated her.

The eventful Sunday soon arrived, the bells pealed merrily from every church, and every step was directed towards the cathedral. Three rows of stone steps running completely round its interior, afforded admirable standing-room for row upon row of richly-dressed spectators, whose wealth of jewels shot scintillations, now of purple, now of crimson, now of yellow light, mocking the dyes of ruby,

amethyst, emerald, sapphire, and topaz, that streamed in brilliant effulgence from the clerestory and great rose windows. The air, heavy with incense and vocal with thrilling music, the shining church plate, the gorgeous vestments of the archbishop and priests, the draperies sprinkled with *fleurs-de-lis*, the royal pomp of the king, arrayed in cloth of gold; the coronation-robcs of those nobles who represented the long list of peers called over by France king-at-arms;—all tended to bewilder the senses and captivate the imagination, especially of that little cluster of peasants in the lowest place, and yet the best place for seeing in the cathedral. And all was but as the background, richly painted, of a single figure, motionless as a statue, armed and holding unfurled a white silken banner beside the high altar. So have I seen the crosier-bearer of an abbess stand perfectly immovable

throughout the long ceremonial of a nun taking the veil.

Her noble purpose was now nobly won. She had raised the siege of Orleans, had brought her king through a file of hostile cities, reduced to submission by the fear of that name which had spread terror among the English—and had now seen him receive the crown of his forefathers and the holy oil of anointing from the Sainte Ampoule—the holy cruse, brought from heaven by a dove, according to tradition, to anoint Clovis the first Christian king.

Bathed in tears, she sank on her knees before Charles, as soon as the holy rites were accomplished, which, according to national belief, made him priest as well as king.

“Gentle king!” said she—and the silver, distinct tones sank into the heart—“now

is fulfilled the will of God that you should come to Rheims and be anointed; showing that you are the true king to whom this kingdom should belong."

What interest attached to this single figure in the pageant! All beside was pre-arranged, and conned out of book: no one knew what Joan would say or do; her words and actions were spontaneous.

Before the king left the cathedral he created three knights, one of whom was the Youth of Commercy: I wish I could say the others were De Poulengey and De Metz. The procession then flowed back to the archbishop's palace, where the coronation feast was prepared. The archbishop sat at the king's table; and the king was served by the Dukes d'Alençon and Barr, and the Count de Clermont. The hour was still early. The common dinner-hour in those days was ten o'clock.

Joan of course had a table of her own; and there her father and uncle tasted wine such as nobles drink, and her mother speculated on the fabrication of *mortreuse* and *blanc-manger*.

“Joan,” said the grateful King after the feast was over, “you have but to say what you wish.”

“My wishes have all been fulfilled,” replied she, sweetly. “I have but to return now to my sheep.”

“Nay, but your king desires to grant you something.”

“Well then, beau sire, let Domremy be henceforth free from taxes.”

“Granted, noble girl!” exclaimed he, with admiration.

And thenceforth the tax-gatherers have always written against the name of Domremy, “Nothing, because of the Maid.”*

* “Néant, à cause de la Pucelle.”

CHAPTER VIII.

"I MUST now," said Joan, after a little pause, "return to my sheep."

"What mean you, Joan?" said the King, quickly. "In the name of whatever is sacred do not leave me while so much remains undone. The Englishman is still in the land."

"Yes," said she, sorrowfully, but firmly, "but my mission is over now. The Lord gave me an errand, and I have done it. He gives me no further commission. Men must fight your battles now, and I hope they will remember that they are such. There is no more in me now than in any girl that plies her distaff."

"I am willing to take my chance of that," said Charles, quickly. "The men continue to believe in you, the English to dread you. Joan, you must not, you dare not, forsake us!"

Joan looked troubled. "What say you?" inquired she of the Duke d'Alençon.

"Precisely as the king does," replied he. "You must not leave us on any account."

"And you?" to Dunois.

"I am quite ashamed of you, Joan," said he, "and gave you credit for more spirit and loyalty. Oh fie, fie! This is very bad indeed of you."

"Do *you* think so?" said she, wistfully, to La Hire.

"By my baton, I do," said he, stoutly; "and I promise you I will take immediately to the very worst courses if you do not remain to purify the camp. I should have thought a girl with the smallest religious

principle would have scorned to forsake her friends at a pinch. Inspired here or inspired there, if you can help us, you ought to do it. We are not inspired; but is that any reason for our laying down our arms?"

"What do *you* say?" inquired she, of the archbishop.

"Why should you think," returned he, "that your heavenly guide will now desert you? Is it reason that, while anything remains to be accomplished, you should fail of any aid which has supported you as yet? Seek its renewal and continuance by prayer, and be not faithless."

She sighed deeply, and her eyes filled with tears.

"I had thought all along," said she, "to return home as soon as my errand here was accomplished."

"Ah," said D'Alençon, with a mischievous smile, "there is some shepherd in the wood."

"There is *not*," said she, quickly; "but my parents will be so disappointed!"

"Is it possible," cried Dunois, "that you will put that respectable couple in the balance against the welfare of the whole country? Forgive me, Joan, but indeed you are wrong. Why did you leave them in the first instance? For a higher duty? You have a higher duty still."

"Gentle king," said she, turning quickly to Charles, "you offered me, just now, anything I would name."

"If you place it in that light," said the King, "certainly I must yield; but will it be fair?"

"Besides, you asked your boon, and had it," said the Archbishop.

"Come," said Dunois, "let you and me

go over to the Zebra ; I think I shall speak a word there with effect."

And he led her off, while those who remained behind silently smiled.

" We can by no means spare her," said Charles.

Duke René had listened to this scene with deep interest. There was something in Joan's honesty, frankness, and self-devotion akin to his own.

It was but a stone's throw from the archbishop's palace to the hostel (*i.e.* hotel) of the Zebra, but the square was crowded like a fair. Jacques and Zabillet, who were watching the show from the window, looked profoundly impressed by the entrance of Dunois.

" My excellent friends," said he, cheerfully, " what an honour and glory it is to you to be the parents of this wonderful daughter ! Why, your names will be handed down to

future generations. It has been so good, so self-denying, so brave of you to lend her to your country, that she might be generalissimo of the French army, and lead us poor fellows to victory. Say ! are you not proud of it ? ”

“ Pride does not become us,” began Jacques, feeling very proud, however.

“ No ; pride does not become us, your lordship,” pursued Zabillet, “ and we have never taken any airs upon ourselves among our neighbours, but have always contented ourselves with leading a virtuous life, in the station in which we were born, and with bringing up our children conformably——”

“ Just so,” interrupted Dunois ; “ and now you see what has come of your noble integrity ; for the king himself is so convinced of your daughter’s extraordinary merit, that he can by no means relinquish her services till the end of the war.”

"The king's majesty is most gracious," said poor Zabillet, turning very red, "but it is time now for Joan to return to her sewing and spinning, and keeping the sheep. Your lordship's grace has very little idea how much she has left behind her for one pair of hands to do, and those none of the youngest."

"My good woman, I am sure the king will provide you with a dairy-maid, or——"

"Brave sir, dairy-maids are not for the like of us, and would give me far more plague than profit. A lady I have never aspired to be, and, if I did, should only get laughed at for my pains. Besides, good sir, it is not only the work. Joan is our only daughter, and we poor people have our feelings."

Saying which she quavered a little, and looked at Joan with watery eyes.

"War is no vocation for a woman," said she. "It was quite against my will that she ever engaged in it, for, even supposing she

sustained no hurt, it must be enough to make one sick to see blood flow and hear the cries of the wounded : but she *did* get hurt, and a very ugly scar that nasty arrow made that she pulled out with her own hands.”

“ Oh, mother, the wound has quite healed,” interposed Joan.

“ It *hasn’t*,” returned Zabillet, with her characteristic positivity ; “ and don’t you go to contradict your mother. Sir, as I was saying, the arrow made a nasty jag—not that I would dwell upon it if the business were to end here, and we were to take her home with us, as I was fully made to understand we should : but the next wound might be worse.”

“ Or it might be better,” said Dunois, “ that’s just what I always say when I get wounded myself. There’s nothing in it when you’re used to it. Why now, I got wounded at the ‘ battle of the herrings.’ ”

"Ah, sir, we were all very sorry to hear it."

"Yes, and what a fuss was made of it, while all the time there was I, comfortably in bed, reading story-books, and having all manner of nice things sent me by the ladies!"

"You are a pleasant gentleman, sir," said Jacques, smiling ruefully, "but—"

"But we must all die once: just so; and we none of us know when. A very good thing too, I think, don't you? Well now, here's the matter to be settled. Joan, like a brave girl, has done wonders for us already; the men fight under her like fury; everything thus far has gone well, and all we want now is, just to get completely rid of the English, and then sit down comfortably for the rest of our lives. Now, will you spoil this delightful plan for the sake of having Joan home to milk the cows just a few weeks, or say months even, the sooner?"

"Dunois, Dunois——" began Joan; but he looked at her imploringly.

"Your lordship has such a way with you," said Jacques, abruptly, "that there's no knowing where to have you, because before one can summon courage to contradict you in one thing, you're off to another."

"Soldiers' practice, my good man; the very cream of tactics."

"Ah, but there's cream of another sort that wants skimming," struck in Zabillet; "and talking of skimming, Joan, I know not where on earth you put the old skimmer, which was once my mother's, for I've never been able to find it since you went away."

"I shall come and taste that cream of yours some day, dame," said Dunois.

"I only wish your lordship would!"

"Consider it a promise, then, the first time I find it convenient. I am very fond of sweet

things, so let me have plenty of them in return for taking the best possible care of your daughter Joan, and intercepting every arrow that is shot at her."

"Your lordship is very good ; your life is dear to France, but yet, one's own daughter——"

"Her life is dear to France too, my friends. See how the people follow her ! A few weeks ago she was nothing, nobody had ever heard of her ; now she will never be forgotten. Will you spoil all ?"

They looked irresolute.

"Joan, why don't you clinch the nail ?" said he, impatiently. "Hear me, all of you. Joan either is an impostor, or she is not. See how she reddens at the very mention of it ! If she has been deceiving us all, why, take her home, and welcome ! I am only for truth and honesty. But I believe in her : I believe what she says. Now, what has she said ? that she

had a message from heaven. Her deeds have avouched it. Beware, then, how you hold her back."

Here the parents and daughter looked at one another with swimming eyes, and silently embraced.

Zabillet then said, almost inarticulately, "Sir, we give her to you : we give her to the country ; but it is against our will. It tears our very hearts."

"Yes, it does," said Jacques, weeping.

"And I rely upon you, sir," said Zabillet, looking full into his deep-blue eyes, which only spoke of honour and honesty, "I rely upon you for keeping your word, and letting no harm come to my girl, in body or soul."

"None that I can prevent," said Dunois. "I cannot say more than that. See, I kiss the cross of my sword ! And now, farewell, my noble hearts. I dare say Joan will like to remain with you, during the short time

we are here. The king will leave Rheims in a few days. Enjoy yourselves together while you can. (Joan! don't cry so!) We shall all have a merry Christmas."

And away he went, carrying all the sunshine with him. About an hour afterwards, Joan returned to the palace, her voice nearly quenched, and her eyes red with crying. After Dunois had gone, poor Zabillet had repented of being talked over by him, and became so dejected, peevish, and contrary, that not one word her husband or daughter could say to her gave satisfaction. As this was a very poor way of enjoying themselves together, Joan thought it best to leave the Zebra when her uncle came in, promising she would return in the evening. Laxart, who had been roaming about, entered, saying, in his simple way, "Do you know there really is a street called 'La Truie qui File?'" when Zabillet interrupted him, with—"Oh, brother,

what do you think has happened?" And Joan thought it best to effect her retreat.

She collected her thoughts as she crossed the square, and then went straight to the king, and said to him—

" Beau sire, I wish to write to the Duke of Burgundy."

" What have you to say to him, Joan?"

" To recall him to duty and loyalty, if it please Heaven."

" The end is desirable enough, though I fear you will not obtain it."

So, at her dictation, a secretary wrote as follows :—



" Jhesus Maria.

" High and mighty prince, Duke of Burgundy,

" Joan, the Maid, charges you, in the name of the King of Heaven, my rightful sovereign Lord, to make with the King of

France a good, firm, and lasting peace. Pardon one another heartily, sincerely, entirely, as good Christians should! If war you must have, go fight the Saracen. Prince of Burgundy, I pray, implore, and entreat for that on which I might well insist, that you will no longer make war on the sacred kingdom of France, but at once draw off your people from its strong places. The gentle King of France is ready to make peace with you on honourable terms: it rests entirely with you. And I do you to wit, in the name of the Lord, out of care for your welfare and honour, that you will gain no victory over the French, and that they will fight in the name of the Lord Jesus. Rely on it, that however many troops you may send into the field, they will do no good; and it will be a great pity to have so much unnecessary bloodshed. I sent you a letter by

a herald, three weeks ago, to beg you to come to the consecration of the king, which has taken place this Sunday, July 17, in this city of Rheims. I have had no answer, nor received any news of my herald. May God have you in his care, and incline your heart to peace! Written at the said Rheims, this 17th of July.”*

So that a stroke of business was even done on the coronation-day — and on a Sunday. But the intention was better than the success. The Duke of Burgundy, who had withdrawn his troops from Orleans in dudgeon, because one of the English chiefs had said he saw no fun in beating the bush, when the Duke was to have all the game, had made up his quarrel only the week before the *sacre*,

* Barante.

and gone publicly to church with the Duke of Bedford on Sunday the 10th, at Notre Dame, where a sermon was preached before them — perhaps on the text “Behold, how good and joyful a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” After this, the two dukes went in solemn procession to the palace, where, in presence of the parliament of Paris, the bishops, and principal citizens, a lecture was read, recapitulating the details of the previous Duke of Burgundy’s murder (without enlarging on the provocation to it, which was *his* assassination of the Duke of Orleans), and after the subject had been well worked up, there was a general cry of “Burgundy for ever! Down with the Armagnacs!”

Next day, the Duke of Burgundy returned to Flanders, accompanied by his sister, the Duchess of Bedford, who passed for a clever woman. He left about seven hundred men

behind him, to assist in defending Paris; no great number, but it showed his animus, and that he was not very likely to consider Joan's letters otherwise than impertinent.

We are not accustomed to suppose it a letter-writing age; yet here is another specimen of its epistolary correspondence—a passage from a letter written to some one in England by the Duke of Bedford.

“My Lord of Burgundy has honourably fulfilled his duty to the king (Henry), and has aided and assisted him here like a trusty kinsman, friend, and vassal. Had it not been for him, Paris might be lost this time. You will hear how the Dauphin has put himself in motion, and crossed the country with a strong force to Rheims, where he is to arrive to-day. To-morrow he will enter the city; and, the day after, he will be anointed. He then means to march upon Paris.”

CHAPTER IX.

"FATHER," said Zabillet, "there is no pleasure whatever in being here any longer now; my enjoyment is quite spoilt."

"Sure," said he, in surprise, "since we are here, free of cost, and since we shall probably lose sight of our girl till winter, we may as well see as much of her now as we can."

"I don't think so at all," said Zabillet, pettishly. "She's always popping in or popping out, and I can't abear to see her going about in that horrid dress, looking neither one thing nor another. It's always 'the king,' or 'the archbishop,' or 'Dunois.' How comes she

to call people by their plain names in that familiar way, as if they had known one another all their lives? ‘Dunois’ indeed! why, if he has not a surname, he has a title, and she might at least call him Count. She’ll get taken down some of these days, it’s my opinion; for, as soon as ever the English are cleared out and the floor cleaned after them, these grand folks will want no more of her, and then home she may come, and welcome!”

“Mother, mother, I am quite amazed at you!” cried Jacques. “‘Come home, and welcome?’ Truly she will be welcome whenever she does come; for home has never been home since she left it, and no one knows that better than you.”

“That’s just what I say,” replied Zabillet, weeping. “These rich folks have got hold of our little ewe lamb, that we can’t at all

spare, though they have beeves and sheep of their own."

"Come, come, you must not cry on this day of all others," said Jacques, soothing her. "Was not it a prime sight to see her at the altar, holding her white banner in the face of them all? I thought, 'You may hold up your heads and wrinkle your noses, but there's not one of you all to set beside my girl.'"

"And that's true, too," said Zabillet, drying her eyes, "and exactly what I said to myself; but, dear me, father, there were some very handsome women among them! Did you notice one with diamonds in her hair?"

"Not I," said Jacques. "To me they were all so much furniture. I knew of but two women there—one was my good old wife, and the other my daughter Joan."

"That is very prettily said of you, Jacques,"

said Zabillet; “and this lady’s hair, for all the diamonds, was neither so thick nor so long as Joan’s.”

At this moment Joan returned, as she had said she would, looking very pale and pensive; and her parents fondly held out their hands to her, and made her sit between them.

“Thou lookest but poorly, my child,” said Zabillet, kissing her.

“The longest day comes to an end at last,” said Joan, sighing, “be it happy or be it miserable. I have long looked forward to this day: it has been a happy one; but now, you see, it is over. Where is uncle?”

“Gone to bed, quite done up with sightseeing.”

“Ah, well! the best place for him, then—dear old man. Mother, I want you to do something for me.”

“What is it, *m’amie?*”

"I want you to cut off my hair."

"Joan!" cried Zabillet, in affright, while Jacques looked at her in surprise.

"I don't mean as if I were bald," said Joan, laughing a little. "Only as short as a boy's. Or say, as short as the king's. You know, his just touches his shoulders. I thought to go home with you and be happy, mother dear, and so I let my hair be as it was, though it was very tiresome. But, now that the king wants me to stay, and the coronation is over, it will be much better, on several accounts, to cut my hair short, for you know I cannot well attend to it. I have not a barber to go about with me like the Sire de Retz, who has his blue-black beard washed, oiled, and curled every morning."

"But, my child, your hair is so nice and long!"

"Long it is, but it won't long be nice, for it will get quite rough and broken under a helmet. Besides, it will grow again, when the campaign is over. So please, mother, cut it. Only think what a nice handle it would be for an English soldier to drag me along by!"

"Cut it by all means, Zabillet," said Jacques, who did not like this last idea at all.

"Well, what must be, must," said Zabillet, regretfully, "and I always carry my shears about me; so sit down on the floor, child, with your head in my lap."

Joan did as she was bidden: it seemed very luxurious to her to feel her mother's fingers straying among her hair and sleeking it out into tresses.

"Dear, dear, how many times have I trimmed up this hair," said Zabillet, "and pranked it with honeysuckles and dog-roses!"

Do you mind, Joan, the last time you danced under the Fairies' Tree?"

"Yes, well enough," said Joan; "I was but a slip of a girl then: that tiresome fellow, Raoul Cerisier, wanted me to dance with him, and I would not."

"Thou hadst an inkling of some of these grand lords, I suppose," said Zabillet.

"Oh, mother! you are pulling my hair so!"

"Why, it was you, who jerked away your head. These grandes, Joan, are nothing to you in the way of marrying men."

"I know it, mother, full well, and there is not one of them I would have, if he were to ask me. What is more, mother dear, I will never have *any* one. I went and promised our Lady of Belmont I would never marry, before I came away."

"Joan! was that right?" said Zabillet.

"I know not whether it were right," said Joan; "but I did it."

"I am sorry for that, Joan," said her father. "A woman's first duties are those of a wife and a mother."

"Ah, dear father, there are plenty of women for both!"

In this dialogue, which was very sweet and soothing to them all, Jacques and Zabillet no longer spoke with the authority they had been accustomed to use to their daughter, and she spoke freely and independently, as one who had outgrown the period of tutelage. But they were none the less dear to one another. As Zabillet cut off each long smooth tress, she handed it to her husband, who smoothed it now and then on his knee.

"Are you not clipping rather too freely?" said Joan. "Remember I am not Jacquemin."

Poor Jacquemin ! I wish he had been here to-day."

"We pressed him to come, but he would not," said Zabillet. "I have three sons, but you are one of them. Jacquemin has the spirit of a girl."

"He knows his place, though, and keeps it," said Jacques, "which is no ordinary merit now-a-days."

"There, that will do," said Joan, putting her hand up to her head, and dismayed to find what a clearance was made.

"Oh, mother !" cried she, "you have left me nothing but stubble !"

"Quite a mistake," said Zabillet; "you have more now than the king."

"Pierre !" said Joan to her youngest brother as he came in, "how do I look ? "

He laughed, and said, "Oh, mother, you have not spared the shears ! Did you want

to stuff a pillow?—You don't look bad, though," added he, seeing his sister's look of chagrin.

"Ah well," said she, recovering her good humour, "it will not matter when they have once seen me. If I had taken the veil, to please our Lady of Belmont, I should have had my hair cut off, all the same, and I should not have been so useful then, to the king."

"Certainly you would not," said Zabillet, as a new prospective evil loomed in the distance. "Don't you ever go and take the veil; or I'll have no more to say to you. That would be worse even than soldiering."

After a pause she added, "Child, we shall go away to-morrow."

"Oh, mother! why?"

"All these grand doings have lost their savour, now I know you will not return

with us. I would rather sit at my spinning, and cry."

"If you cry, I must cry too."

"You will, you will, when we are far apart from one another!"

"Here's a jolly end to a coronation day!" said Pierre. "Why, I *would* do something better if I was either of you two."

"Silence, malapert," said Jacques, gravely, "and respect their feelings."

Joan soon cleared up, and said, "Perhaps it is well you should leave me, for otherwise I must leave you. The king is going on a pilgrimage to Corbeni, to pray at the shrine of St. Macon."*

"Ah, he is a good young gentleman," said Zabillet. "I trust the young English king will soon give over tormenting him."

* This was supposed to give virtue to the touch for the king's evil.

"Joan! do you never feel fear?" said Jacques.

"No," said Joan, "I fear nothing but treachery."*

Finally, it was arranged that the old people should depart early on the morrow—early enough for Joan and her brothers to see them a few miles on the road. She was glad to caress old Dagobert again: he knew her well, and eyed her with a good deal of solemnity. It was a beautiful summer morning, and the air and exercise put them all in cheerful spirits, so that they bore the parting very well. When Joan got back to Rheims, she found everything in readiness for the pilgrimage. Dunois came up to her, evidently with something to communicate; but stopped short, for an instant, as his eye fell on her, and said—

"Comment?"

This was the only *comment*, however, he

* Procès.

made, and, with a little smile, he hastened to say—

“ You will be glad, I am sure, to know that the king has made our friend La Hire Bailli of the Vermandois.”

“ Oh, I am glad indeed! Is he not glad himself?”

“ Of course he is.”

So they all went to Corbeni, after taking leave of the archbishop; and the people again cried “ Noël” as they defiled through the streets.

At Corbeni, deputies from Laon came to submit themselves to the king. From Corbeni, the king led his army to Provins, to Soissons, and to Château Thierry. He had little more to do than to canter over the ground; the closer he drew to Paris, the greater was the alarm at his approach. Paris itself had just then no defender of note

but the Sire de L'Isle Adam ; but the Duke of Bedford speedily returned from England with Beaufort, Cardinal of Winchester, and with considerable reinforcements ; which, joined to the Burgundians, and the garrisons he drew out of Normandy, put at his command about ten thousand men. On the 4th of August, he addressed the following letter to the French king :—

“ We, John of Lancaster, Regent of France and Duke of Bedford, make known to you, Charles de Valois, who were wont to style yourself Dauphin of Vienne, but at present without cause call yourself king, for wrongfully do you make attempts against the crown and dominion of the very high, most excellent, and renowned, Henry, by the grace of God true and natural lord of the kingdoms of France and England,—deceiving the simple people by

your telling them that you come to give peace and security, which is not the fact, nor can it be done by the means you have pursued and are now following, with the aid of superstitious and wicked persons, such as a woman of disorderly and infamous life and dissolute manners, dressed in the clothes of a man, together with an apostate and seditious mendicant friar. You have also taken forcible possession of several towns and castles belonging to my said lord the king, causing the inhabitants thereof to perjure themselves by breaking the peace which was most solemnly sworn to by the then kings of France and England, the barons, peers, prelates, and three estates of the realm.

“We, to defend the rights of our said lord the king, have taken the field in person, and shall pursue you from place to place, in the hope of meeting you, which we have never yet

done. As we most heartily desire an end to the war, we summon and require of you, if you be a prince desirous of gaining honour, to take compassion on the poor people who have on your account been so long and grievously harassed, that an end may be put to their affliction by terminating this war.

“Choose, therefore, in this country of Brie, where we now are not very far from each other, some convenient place for us to meet; and, having fixed on a day, appear there with the abandoned woman, the apostate monk, and such force as you may please to bring.

“Should you then make proposals for peace, we will do all that can be expected from a Catholic prince, for we are always ready to conclude a solid peace—not such a false and treacherous one as that of Montereau-fault-Yonne, when, through your connivance, that most horrid and disgraceful murder was com-

mitted on the person of our late beloved father (in-law), John, Duke of Burgundy, whose soul may God receive. By means of this peace so wickedly violated by you, more than a hundred nobles have deserted your realm, as may be seen by the letters patent under your own hand and seal. However, if, through the iniquity of mankind, peace cannot be obtained, we will then each with our swords defend our quarrel before God, whom we humbly supplicate to dispose the hearts of these people so that they may dwell in peace without further oppression.

“Given at Montereau-faut-Yonne the 7th day of August, in the year of grace 1429. Signed by the Lord Regent of France, Duke of Bedford.”

“If that won’t settle the fellow, I don’t know what will,” was perhaps the duke’s

reflection when he set his seal to this letter.
“ He must either fight, or stand a convicted
coward.”

“ Your master,” said Charles, to the bearer
of the letter, “ will need very little trouble to
find me, for it is I who seek him.”

In fact, the Oriflamme* advanced to within
a little distance of Paris, where the two armies
came in sight.

All was prepared with skill and order for
the engagement. It was a pleasure to see the
soldier-like bearing of Joan, and the skill with
which she directed the manœuvres of her men.
D’Alençon said she had a peculiar genius for
manœuvring artillery. The Duke of Bedford
was willing to be attacked, but not to attack,
and when he found that this was precisely the

* The Oriflamme disappeared in the next reign. It
was of red silk, with golden flames, and was supposed to
have been brought by an angel to Clovis.

case with the king, he retreated to Paris, where the inhabitants were in the greatest consternation at the near approach of the enemy.

Thus Charles probably lost the opportunity for a decisive victory for want of a little more spirit. In later years, he did not prove deficient in it ; but, as yet, he was wanting in the dash which cries "*en avant !*" In a multitude of counsellors he did not find wisdom. Some of them were for returning to the Loire : an ineffectual attempt, however, to cross the Seine, which was disputed by the Burgundians, induced the king to return to Château Thierry, from whence, to the great joy of Joan, of Duke René, and of most of his captains, he advanced within ten miles of Paris, the poor people hailing him with cries of "*Noël !*" and the priests singing *Te Deum* in the churches.

"Ah !" said Joan to Dunois, "these good

people are very loyal and very devout. When I die, I should like it to be here."

"Joan!" exclaimed he, "do you know where and when you shall die?"

"I neither know when nor where," she replied. "I shall die when it pleases God. I have fulfilled what He gave me to do, which was to raise the siege of Orleans, and have the king anointed at Rheims. Were it His will, I would fain go home now to my dear parents and brothers, and keep their sheep and cattle."* Saying which she looked upwards, with eyes full of tears.

And never did her noble companions feel more assured that she was a child of God, and not of the devil, as the English maintained.†

* "Leurs brebis et bétail."—*Deposition of Dunois.*

† Ibid.

CHAPTER X.

HER great renown had left her just as simple and modest as ever.* There was seen in her the same piety; she continued to frequent the churches; and sometimes complied with the request of some poor woman that she would be sponsor for her infant at the font.† Her sanctity and purity were such as to abash and check the many around her whose lives and conversation had habitually been the very reverse. There were

* "Sa grande renommé l'avait laissée aussi simple et aussi modeste," &c. &c.—*Barante.*

† Procès.

those who would have spoken to her of love : they had not liberty to utter a second word about it. She was gentle and kind, especially to the poor, whom she helped when she could. Not to wound their feelings, she did not roughly repulse them when they came to kiss her hands, for she accepted it as only their witness to belief in her mission. Every night, she was careful to lodge with some respectable woman, with whom she generally slept. She never ascribed miraculous virtue to her banner, though others were ready to do so.

“ My mission,” said she, “ is a ministry* —nothing more.”

Duke René, whose good, pure, and lofty nature was akin to that of our beloved Prince Consort,† liked to talk to her of noble deeds,

* “ Mon fait,” disait elle, “ n'est qu'un ministère.”

† “ He cultivated in himself, and encouraged in others, theology, astronomy, mathematics, medicine, jurispru-

and also to question her about her shepherd life. Perhaps it was in consequence of the simple charm she threw around it, that, in after years, when his long imprisonment was ended, he and his queen played shepherd and shepherdess awhile—

“Portant la panetièrē
Et houlette, et chapeau,” &c.

To René we owe the introduction of the Provence rose and Muscatel grape.

The Duke of Bedford, finding the king still in the neighbourhood of Paris, again took the field, at the head of about ten or twelve thousand men. Charles was near the village of Baron, in the neighbourhood of Senlis. The duke took up a strong position near the abbey of La Victoire: hedges and ditches

dence, and education; architecture, sculpture, and painting were either patronised or practised by him.”

covered his flanks, the river and a large pond were in the rear; the front was fortified by his archers with sharp stakes. Overhead the banner of France, as well as of England, waved defiance to the Oriflamme—

“ Sound, trumpets! Knights, prick forth to noble deeds!
A kingdom is the prize.”

The king himself is in the field, with Joan, and D'Alençon, and the dukes of Lorraine and Barr, Dunois, De Boussac, De Retz with the blue-black beard, Saintrailles, De Gaucourt, and Etienne de Vignolles, well known to us as La Hire.

Something great ought to have been done, but nothing great was done. Truly it seemed, with regard to Joan, as if her ministry really had or ought to have ended, for she was vacillating and uncertain. Charles was full of ardour for the attack; he cantered along

the front, like a brilliant chevalier, within two bowshots of the enemy. But the palisades of the English seem to have answered the double purpose of keeping themselves in and the French out.

Here and there, a valiant Frenchman, on horse or on foot, goes close to the palisades and defies the foe ; on which a nimble Englishman leaps out and meets him, hand to hand. The boy pages, in like manner, defy each other. But all this was retail, not wholesale.

Sound a charge, trumpets ! Here comes the king's favourite, La Tremouille, gay as a butterfly, a very carpet-knight, dashing forward in grand style, mounted on a fine horse, covered with dazzling armour, that sends forth "clear, trembling lustres, that torment the sight." Surely, it must be Paris himself, or at least County Paris. He couches his lance ! He claps his spurs into his horse's

sides up to their rowels ! he speeds towards
the stakes !—

“But stay—O spite !
But mark—poor knight,
What dreadful dole is here !
Eyes ! do you see ?
How can it be ?
O dainty duck ! oh dear !”

Had Shakspeare been a contemporary poet, those verses could not have failed to be applied on the occasion. “Par malheur,” his horse stopped short, and he had the greatest difficulty in retreating in face of the enemy. So ended the brilliant demonstration of the Sire de la Tremouille !

Not one but several white standards shook their silken folds over the French forces ; for sundry lords and knights had copied Joan’s banner “with the strange device.” Hence, the English knew not where to look for her, which contributed to her safety.

They could not suppose the young knight in silver armour, who now and then shot forward and swept the plain nearly to the palisades, as if to encourage others to follow, was the dreaded Maid.

Another chevalresque figure, in black and gold armour, with azure scarf and plume, mounted on a coal-black steed, was De Retz of the blue-black beard, with his iron will looking through its dark windows, his eyes; and his black Fate like *atra Cura*, behind him on the saddle, clasping him with her weird arms.

As Joan gently cantered back from the palisades, without any sign of fear, she passed De Retz and wonderingly looked at him to see why he remained there immovable. He was attentively looking at a poor wretch writhing in agony from an arrow in the eye.

“Ah!” cried she, in horror and pity, and she was about to dismount, when the poor man died. She looked piteously at

De Retz, but there was a strange smile on his face, as if he had been enjoying the sight. She rode from him in disgust.

Towards sunset, the fight became more animated. The heat was very great; the combatants could scarcely see one another for clouds of dust. Flights of arrows whistled through the air. The foes were so equally matched that when the increasing darkness compelled them to cease, neither side had gained any decisive advantage. The Duke of Bedford warmly thanked his Picard troops for having supported the brunt of the battle. Thus ended this brilliant passage-of-arms.

Charles thought this enough for one while; so he drew off to Crespy, passing Compiègne—a name we are now very familiar with—which opened its gates. The Duke of Bedford drew off to Paris. The cause of the English in France grew weaker and weaker. That of Charles the Seventh grew daily stronger.

Now ensued negotiations with the Duke of Burgundy, whom the king desired to regain and the English to retain. While these negotiations pended, there was a truce between them, which neither party observed when they thought they could gain something by breaking it. The Duke of Burgundy had much to elate his pride; and moreover was preparing to marry his third wife.

Now we come to a curious trait of the times. Our brave La Hire, the truce not extending to the English, attacked their fortress of Château Gaillard by night, and carried it. Kingston, the English commandant, being surprised, escaped for his life. Entered La Hire, looked hither and thither, into this room and that, and presently found, underground, a countryman of his, Arnold de Barbazan, closely imprisoned in an iron cage, in which he had been kept nine years! Another illustration, this, of Bluebeard's times.

La Hire immediately had the cage broken open ; but De Barbazan would not come out ! He said he had given Kingston his word not to do so without his consent ; on this account, doubtless, his life had been spared.

So a messenger was despatched after Kingston, to beg him to release this honourable man from his engagement ; which he did. And then De Barbazan went and presented himself to the king, who had given him up for dead. He was the first to bear the title of the “knight without reproach.”

“Durant le dit siége, La Hire
Se passe Seine sur le tard
Et l'eschelle prend sans mot dire
La place de Château Gaillard.

“Elle est sept lieues de Rouen,
Et fut là trouvé enferré
Dans une fosse Barbazan
Où neuf ans avoit demeuré.”*

Paris now lay invitingly open, the Duke

* Martial, the Parisian Homer.

of Bedford was absent, the inhabitants intimidated; but—"le Sire de la Tremouille ne le voulait point." One is sick of such a poltroon. Joan urged and besought the king to enter his capital, assuring him of victory, and Duke René warmly supported her. Her renown was greater than ever. She and the vanguard, led by D'Alençon, Duke René, De Retz, De Boussac, and all the bravest knights, advanced to St. Denis and there took up their quarters. The general body of the army found quarters in the neighbouring villages.

It was expedient to find friends within the walls; and D'Alençon wrote to the provost of Paris and other influential persons in very insinuating terms, and not sparing promises. But the Parisians were at this time loyal to the king of England; they therefore applied themselves all the more diligently to repairing and defending their

walls. Loyal sermons were preached from pulpits, loyal contributions poured into the treasury. The populace were inflamed by assurances that the soldiers of Charles were monsters of brutality, and that their city would be razed to the ground.*

The royal troops gave but too much colour for these exaggerations. They got no pay, and were obliged to feed themselves as they could; consequently they were not very scrupulous in levying involuntary contributions, and they were growing disorderly and demoralised. This occasioned grief of heart to Joan; and one day falling in with two notorious offenders, she broke her sword on their shoulders. It was the sword of St. Catherine of Fierbois.

Charles was vexed when he heard this;

* A citizen of Paris kept a journal at this time which shows what strange impressions were entertained of Joan.

and said to her, " You should have used a good thick stick ; it would have done as well."

" Certainly I am sorry," said she, " because the sword came from the church of St. Catherine whom I love so much. However, I care forty times more for my banner than for any sword, for my aim is never to kill, and seldom to hurt."

Thenceforth she generally contented herself with leading the way with her standard, keeping back assailants either with her lance or with a little axe attached to her girdle.

At length, after spending eight days at St. Denis, the French drew up in battle array before the walls of Paris, nearly where the Rue Traversière now stands. They were accompanied by a formidable artillery, and by waggons of faggots to fill up the ditches.

It was on the day of the Nativity of the Virgin, and the Parisians were attending high mass. All at once, those who were in church

heard cries of “The Armagnacs are on us!” “All is lost!” Great confusion ensued; the walls were hastily manned, and the English and Burgundian standards unfurled.

Soon a hand-to-hand combat commenced. Joan and some of her brothers-in-arms attacked the first barrier: they set fire to the palisade and got within it; but there were still two ditches between them and the wall. Joan saw that the first of these was not dangerous; but the second was deep and full of water, which she was not aware of. She incited the men-at-arms by crying—

“Forward! forward! you will sleep to-night in Paris!”

But she afterwards said that this was not at the suggestion of the voices. Had the French concentrated their strength on this point, no doubt it would have been carried; but the king hung back at St. Denis, and the chiefs were scattered. The Duke d’Alençon

had taken up a position where he was out of gunshot.

Meanwhile, Joan, with De Retz and others, passed the first fosse. On reaching the second, and finding it full of water and mud, she went along the brink, sounding it with her lance. Without being discouraged, she desired faggots and fascines to be fetched. She was obeyed with alacrity, and her companions seemed determined to support her, though the defenders had brought culverins to bear upon them, and they were in a complete shower of arrows. The combatants on both sides, being within speaking distance, heaped abuse upon each other. Joan cried, "Surrender to the King of France!" and was answered with insults and contumelies. Nothing damped her resolution. But presently, wounded by an arrow, she dropped to the ground, on the reverse side of a mound between the two fosses; and here she was

obliged to remain, being in too much pain to move, but animating and directing her companions.

And thus she continued all day. Darkness came on, but still they were unable to cross the second ditch; and La Tremouille sent them orders to draw off to St. Denis. Joan would not go: she remained reclining under the mound, till D'Alençon, after repeated messages, sent Guichard de Thiebronne to bring her off whether she would or not.

A contentious council ensued: La Tremouille, mean fellow, was for falling back on the Loire.

“Fall back on the Loire!” exclaimed the indignant René. “Retreat from the invader while Paris remains in his hands? Never, never! Forward to the capital, never to give way till it is recovered! ”*

* Hon. Edmund Phipps.

His voice was not attended to, however; La Tremouille's counsels prevailed, and Joan was accused of having said they should sleep that night in Paris. Was it her fault or La Tremouille's that they did not?

"My voice is now of no good," said she to the king, "for my council no longer lead me. I have no more mission now than any other girl has, and shall hang up my sword in the abbey-church and go home."

"Joan! do not forsake me!" said Charles. And again she obeyed her king against her own judgment. She hung up her sword over the altar of St. Denis, however, because, she said, his name was the war-cry of France.

Charles's good-for-nothing mother, Isabelle of Bavaria, was within the walls of Paris at this time, at the Hotel de St. Pol. She had, from the first, sided with her son's foes.

Had Charles adopted a bolder course at this moment, there can be little doubt that

Paris would have been carried, and all the inferior towns would have opened their gates to him. But, setting La Tremouille aside (whom I wish at the bottom of the sea, for reasons both English and French, for then we should never have had Joan's death to answer for), only think how the poor king was hampered! He had no money to pay his troops, who were continually walking off, so that to reckon his army at any given number was no good, because it never counted two days alike. I cannot help thinking this was the reason why, ten years later, he laid the foundation of a regular army, by ordering that each village in the kingdom should furnish and pay a foot-archer, who should be free from all taxes and subsidies. (See Mrs. Markham.) This corps, amounting to, say 22,000 men, was called the Franc Archiers.

Well would it have been for him, poor man,

if he had had his wits as much about him at this time. But how could he complain of his soldiers, if he was beginning to sing “home, sweet home,” himself? and to think he should like to be back at Chinon or Mehun-sur-Yevre, and have a little hunting, hawking, and autumn-gardening? We know some one a good deal cleverer, who went home very inopportunely, as many thought, from Villafranca; but it all came right in the end, and so Charles hoped it would now.

So he led his troops back across the Loire, and then let a good many of them scatter themselves, with virtue for their reward: the rest he led to winter quarters. He left strong garrisons in the cities he had taken, and among these was Compiègne, which he left in charge of De Flavy, a man as brave, but as wicked, as Bluebeard.

While Charles—having thus missed the tide which, taken at the ebb, leads on to

fortune—retreated across the country as if returning from a tournament, the Duke of Bedford re-entered Paris, where the Duke of Burgundy soon joined him with his sister, the Duchess of Bedford, who had been spending two months with him. Many debates ensued, and the English now being unpopular in Paris, it was decided in parliament, to Bedford's great dissatisfaction, that he should make over the regency to the Duke of Burgundy, and content himself with the government of Normandy. In about a fortnight, therefore, he led off his English troops to Rouen, leaving the Parisians a prey to the five or six thousand disorderly Picards the Duke of Burgundy had brought with him, who pillaged their entertainers without remorse, and desolated the neighbouring villages.

It may here be said, though a little too late, that among the towns which surrendered to Charles, on his way to Paris, was Beauvais,

the citizens of which joyfully received him, and shamefully chased out their disaffected bishop, Pierre Cauchon, which accounts for his subsequent malignity.

A fragment, consisting of two machicolated towers, alone remains to point out now the site of the castle at Mehun-sur-Yevre, where Charles the Seventh spent much of his earlier life, and where he at last ended his days. It was only a few miles from Bourges, the ancient capital of Berri, whither he was now leading his army for the winter.

The Rue de la Grosse Armée may still be seen in Bourges, where Charles lodged those of his men whom he quartered in the city; and the Rue de la Petite Armée adjoins it, but the camp was without the walls, which were old Roman ramparts, and flanked with sixty towers.

Jacques Cœur, the merchant-prince, and all the city dignitaries poured out of the city to

welcome the king, who, if not King of France, was, at any rate, King of Bourges, and honoured accordingly. Great was the stir in the grand old town. Jacques Cœur's house was not then built, or, at any rate, not completed ; but, in the Rue des Vieilles Prisons, still exists a mansion called L'Hotel Allemand, which the king occasionally occupied, and where, if tradition be believed, his son, the little Dauphin, afterwards Louis the Eleventh, had been born about seven years before.

This old palace is now a nunnery of Sœurs Bleues. You might pass its low portal and ancient windows without guessing anything particular to be within ; but this outward simplicity has been the result of design, to make the richness of the interior more impressive. Were you to ring the bell and obtain admission, you would find yourself in a small but singularly beautiful court, where the intricate details of the building would be revealed in full view ;

its walls being adorned with medallions of great beauty, the mouldings and tablets decorated in the richest manner, the portals supported by wreathed pillars, and the small tourelles covered with arabesque tracery to their very pinnacles. Over the principal doorway is the medallion of a warrior, in a grotesque helmet, supposed to represent Priam, from whom the French kings claimed descent. In witness whereof, see the city of Troyes! Other medallions are strangely grotesque. The ornamentation with which the whole is encrusted would almost repay examination with a magnifying glass: the chapel is one mass of lacework carving, and its bas-reliefs are riddles. Numerous spiral staircases, with niches containing statuettes, lead to the different saloons. One of these has a carved ceiling of extreme beauty. Another has a magnificent chimney-piece.*

* Miss Costello's "Auvergne."

Here, then, Charles found himself much more at his ease than under the walls of Paris ; and as honey attracts flies, so did he prove attractive to the host of gay lordlings and fair ladies, minstrels, trouveurs, jongleurs, jesters and merrymakers of all sorts, who were wont to prey on him.

As for Joan, she was lodged with the highly respectable Dame Marguerite La Tourolde, who thought herself happy to have her, and who lived in an ancient house with gables facing outwards to the street, and with a frame front of ornamental timber and innumerable small lattices. As for De Metz and De Poulengy, they were hospitably entertained by a kinsman of the former, the *porte cochère* of whose roomy, gloomy dwelling was in a dead wall of the court quarter, at no great distance.

CHAPTER XI.

SIR LYON DE L'ETOILE, the old knight with whom De Poulengy and De Metz boarded, was garrulous and deaf, so that he was fonder of telling long stories than of listening to those of other people, and all his stories tended to prove that chivalry was declining, and would soon be extinct—which was taking such a very low-spirited view of affairs that De Metz soon found a pretext for quitting his fireside, and going out of doors.

He had not walked far before he observed himself furtively watched by a small boy, whom he immediately collared, saying, “Where is your lady?”

"My lady," replied the small boy, "is with the queen, at Mehun-sur-Yevre, and she sends you this kerchief of pleasance, and desires that you will henceforth style yourself the Adventurous Squire."

"Tell your lady that the Adventurous Squire will soon cast himself at her feet," said De Metz, presenting a small coin to the small boy, who, with a smile and a bow, disappeared. He then unfolded the kerchief of pleasance, which was what we should familiarly style a silk handkerchief, and after examining it attentively, he tied it round his arm.

After this De Metz ordered his horse, and told De Poulengey where he was going. He left it uncertain whether he should return: towards nightfall, however, he reappeared, looking as cross as could be. De Poulengey asked him what was the matter.

"I am afraid I must give that girl up," said he. "What do you think she began by asking me? Whether I were engaged to be married! I told her I was saving myself for her, for that I had thought we were more than half engaged already. She seemed quite surprised and amused, and said she should have thought herself quite at liberty to marry any day since the summer, had any one come forward to her liking, which had not happened to be the case. Then she said she was very well pleased with my conduct during the campaign, as in such and such an instance, giving me details and particulars, De Poulengey, that showed I must constantly have been watched! I only wish I knew by whom! It is too bad; and yet the interest therein betrayed was flattering."

"Certainly," said De Poulengey.

"Then," pursued De Metz, "I thanked her

for her kerchief of pleasance, and was going to say something rather neat about it, when she exclaimed that I had not put it on in the proper manner, and taking it from my arm, she put it over my head, and tied it in a large bow under my chin, which she pronounced most becoming. It did very well to laugh at, and it was pleasant to have her white fingers so engaged; but when she declared I must return to Bourges in that guise, and walk about the streets for three weeks, like a ridiculous old woman with the toothache, I turned restive!"

"I do not wonder at that!" said De Poulengey. "She was wanting in proper respect for you; and where there is no respect, there can be no real love."

"In short, we had a few words," said De Metz. "Sharp ones, too! and bitter. She said she had long feared I was deficient

in strength of mind, and that this would be a test of it. Moral courage was very little esteemed by the world in comparison of physical courage, of which I had lately given ample proof; and she instanced my engagement with the Englishman, and that little affair with the two Picards, as if she had been there herself."

"Perhaps she was," said De Poulengey.

De Metz gave a start. "Yet, no," said he, "it could not be. It may do very well for our Maid to go about like a man-at-arms, but Rosaure would not. No! that elfin page is more likely to be at the bottom of it. I'll pull his ears if I ever find him playing the spy."

"Why, all she had heard was to your credit," said De Poulengey. "I hope she knew how you came to the rescue when that gigantic Burgundian had brought me down."

"Oh, there was nothing in that," said De Metz; "I rather think she made a passing allusion to it, but the drift of all was, that such trifles as those were mere emptiness compared with the courage that could face the world's laugh. I told her that to save king or country, or to be any real good to her ladyship, I would do it with pleasure, but not for a mere whim; so then she said she had always maintained I had not the real chivalric spirit in me, and so forth, and just then the queen sent for her, and we parted unfriendly."

"It will all come straight again, never fear," said De Poulengey. "Otherwise she is not worth vexing for."

"Easy to say," muttered De Metz. "Here am I, getting in years, and it is time for me to settle."

Meanwhile, Marguerite de la Tourolde came hastily to Joan, and said—

"Maiden! there are numbers of women at the door, who have brought crosses and chaplets for you to bless."

On this Joan laughed, and replied, "Touch them yourself; it will do just as well."*

"Ah! but they will not think so," said Dame Marguerite; "nor, in truth, should I."

"I will go and speak to them," said Joan, "and tell them there is no more virtue in my touch than in that of any other person."

Directly she showed herself, however, the women clustered about her, seizing her by the hands, the feet, and the surcoat, which they eagerly kissed, in spite of her laughing and protesting; and then they all had a little

* "A Bourges, des femmes la priant de toucher des croix et des chapelets, elle se mit à rire, et dit à la Dame Marguerite, chez qui elle logeait, 'Touchez-les vous-même; ils seront tous aussi bons.'"

chat together, and the women said how grateful they were to her for getting the king anointed, and for raising the siege, and one of them said how glad she should be if Joan would hold her infant at the font, to which Joan readily agreed, out of kindness and good fellowship, though assuring her, and all who heard her, that she had no supernatural gifts; which they did not believe. She inquired into the wants of those whose appearance bespoke poverty, and, according to her means, relieved them.*

The mothers were continuing to hang about her, when some *avant-couriers*, galloping down the street, rode through them, slashing their whips mercilessly from side to side. Joan's colour rose with indignation, as the poor women

* "Venoient les pauvres gens volontiers à elle pour ce qu'elle ne leur faisoient point de deplaisir, mais les supportoit à son pouvoir."—*Procès*, i. 102.

were scattered like frightened hens; but the couriers were already beyond reach of her voice, and as a train gaily pranked in scarlet and gold defiled past the house, the Dame de la Tourolde exclaimed—

“ Surely it must be the queen?”

“ Oh no! no one half so good,” said Joan. “ It is Gilles de Retz. See how haughtily he rides along, as though he were a prince of the blood.”

“ He is handsome enough,” said Dame Marguerite.

“ He has fought bravely throughout the campaign,” said Joan, “ but he is cruel, and would rather stab than ransom a prisoner.”

The reader is not to suppose Joan always walking about in armour. She seldom or ever wore it in church; and we know how often she was going there; but she always wore male attire. Her own expression, “ black as

my coat," shows that the suit she wore under her armour was of some dark material, probably cloth or leather; while, when fully armed, she now wore a crimson velvet surcoat, embroidered with gold and silver. Michelet supposes that so many months of constant association with men must inevitably have impaired her simplicity, and says, "It is not with impunity that one becomes all at once rich, noble, honoured, the equal of nobles and princes. That beautiful costume, those proofs of royal favour, must, in the long run, have impaired her heroic simplicity." This particular application of his general observation is quite gratuitous. We have numberless little traits of what she did and what she said throughout the whole of her short course—they are patent and unique; and they betray no deterioration.

If one pursues one's daily toil in a bad

air, yet if one sleeps nightly in a purer atmosphere, physicians tell us that health may be preserved. Joan spent her days among princes, knights, and men-at-arms, to whom she was not sparing of her home-truths;* but every night she slept with some respectable, motherly woman of the bourgeois class, or was the guest of some honourable lady. Moreover, as Antæus renewed his strength every time he touched the ground, Joan's spiritual life received strength every time she slipped into a church and held intercourse with Heaven.

Christmas came — that Christmas she had

* Reviewing the troops in the market-place, on her second visit to Orleans, she heard “un grand seigneur (je soupçonne que c’était le Duc d’Alençon) proféra un jurement honteux où il reniait le nom de Dieu.” Joan exclaimed, “How! do you take the name of our Lord in vain? You shall not go hence till you have unsaid what you have said!” and carried her point.—*Le Brun*, ii. 248.

hoped to spend with her parents; but they were far apart, and could neither come to her nor could she go to them. When she spoke of it to the king, he said he could not spare her. And when the tears glistened in her eyes, he said, "Nay, Joan, be content; I am preparing you a pleasant surprise."

She thought he had sent for her parents, and that they were coming across the country. Instead of this, he was having letters patent made out to ennable the family. It was a great disappointment, and she could not show the gratitude he had expected; consequently, he was disappointed too.

"So you are one of us now, Joan," said Dunois, cordially.

"One of you?" said she, smiling ruefully. "I shall always be I by myself, I. There is no heraldry in me; and as for my good mother—fancy her a lady!"

Dunois could not help smiling. "I own," said he, "that the king has rewarded you with the coin that came readiest to him. Literal coin, alas! he has not much of ;* and if he cannot pay his own men-at-arms, how shall he bestow lands and money on your father?"

"My father asked him for no money," said she, somewhat proudly, "nor yet for honours, which cannot be supported without it. In his own little neighbourhood he has always made the name of Jacques Darc respected; he will only get laughed at if he calls himself Jacques du Lys."

"Ah, well!" said Dunois, "there is a good deal in a name. I cannot think as you do

* She had, however, cost him six hundred crowns in four months, by her arms, horses, and the attendants he had appointed her. Louis de Contes had now gone home.

of barren honour. You who have so much of it can afford to hold it cheap."

"I can never make any of you understand," said she, impatiently, "that I was but an instrument in the hand of another, and that the hand has now laid me aside."

"Oh, yes," said Dunois, laughing, "we understand, only we do not believe."

"That just expresses the religion of most of you."

"Come Joan, do not be peevish. Recollect what mercies we have to be thankful for. This time last year I was in the beleaguered city. We had a truce, in honour of the holy season. Lord Suffolk and I were very polite to each other—he sent me some almonds and raisins, and I sent him some black plush to line his cloak."

"What a strange present!"

"It was very simple. I asked the valet

who brought the fruit if he knew anything his lord was particularly in want of, and he mentioned the plush."

Pierre La Rousse—the old, disabled soldier who had received a night's lodging at Jacques Darc's about eighteen months before—now found it worth his while to visit Domremy for the sake of hearing news of that wonderful girl, "Jeannette."

He found the diminished family, consisting of Jacques, Zabillet, and Jacquemin, all assembled in front of their cottage, over the door of which, Jacquemin, mounted on a ladder, was nailing a scutcheon.

"Higher, boy; a trifle higher," said Zabillet, stepping backward to see the effect, and thereby treading on La Rousse's foot.

"*Pardon, pardon,*" said she, turning round. "What, is it you, old friend? You are kindly welcome. I suppose you have come over to

congratulate us on having got handles to our names!"

"No, truly," said La Rousse, "I had not heard anything of it. What do you mean?"

"There, there! 'tis all a parcel of nonsense," said Jacques, looking pleased, however. "The king has given us a patent of nobility, though without a foot of land to grace it; so now we have De or Du before our names, I am sure I forget which, and we are no longer Darc, but Du Lys, and we have a family motto, and my wife is a dame, and I am a gentleman. I look like one, don't I?" and he showed the horny, tool-harden'd palms of his hands, and laughed.

"The king has done right well, and I am pleased to hear it," said La Rousse.

"Oh! I'm hardly pleased; I can do nothing but laugh," said Zabillet. "Dame Zabillet,

quotha!' Nay, Zabillet me no Zabillets— Dame Isabelle, an' it please you! Dame Isabelle Romée; for that's my name in full!"

"See here," said Jacquemin, going over the scutcheon slowly with his finger. "I can't read the words, but here's a wheatsheaf with three vine-leaves over it, and on either side a large bunch of grapes. What may it portend or signify?"

"That's plain enough," said La Rousse. "The wheatsheaf represents your worthy father, whose time has chiefly been spent in husbandry; the three vine-leaves are his three sons, of whom you are one; and the two bunches of grapes are his wife and daughter."

"You explain it like the patriarch Joseph," said Jacques, "and have made as clear as day what was a mystery to us. Joan may well

be compared to a bunch of grapes, for she is both sweet and strong; and her mother was the same once on a time. The vine-leaves, as you say, are three in number, and so are my sons; but to liken me to a wheat-sheaf, the emblem of plenteousness, seems too high a compliment."

"Why, the very thing the king intended was to compliment you," said La Rousse, "and he has hit it off exactly."

"It would give me great satisfaction," said Jacquemin, "if you could make out the motto; for though I have heard it more than once, I have forgotten it."

"The motto," said La Rousse, deliberately, after eyeing it a good while, "is 'Vive Labeur,' long live labour."

"Well, that's sure to come true, anyhow," said Jacques du Lys, laughing; "for, as long as the world lasts, there'll be no end of work.

Long live the labourer would have been more pertinent."

"There was not room to get it in," said La Rousse. "Well, Master Jacquemin, you have made a tidy job of it, and very ornamental it looks."

"Uncommon, at any rate," said Jacquemin, well satisfied.

"Uncommon ornamental — ornamentally uncommon. You'll be having a power of strangers coming to look at it," which was a truer word than the old soldier knew. The present scutcheon, however, bears the date 1481, and under the above device is the shield of France—three fleurs-de-lis proper, with the words "Vive le Roi Louis," i.e. Louis the Eleventh. On either side of this is a similarly sized shield, one exhibiting three spear-heads inverted (whatever they may typify), and a star between them; the other,

a sword, point upwards, surmounted by a coronet adorned with strawberry-leaves.

“Come in! come in!” said Zabillet, hospitably. “Though we are ennobled, we are not a bit altered. You must share the contents of the *pot-au-feu*, and we will talk of old times. Ah, well-a-day! it seems a century since you first came here.”

CHAPTER XII.

WHEN the courtiers went to pay the compliments of the season to the king and queen, Joan received the congratulations due to her on her newly-acquired nobility. She really was glad of it not only for herself but in respect of Jeannot and Pierre, who had hitherto been at a disadvantage in company with young men of noble birth; and there were substantial evils and systematic oppressions in those days attending the lot of peasants.

She found Charles in weeds of peace, that is to say, a long loose silken gown with wide sleeves, *au sien de sa famille*, with the

little Dauphin aged seven, afterwards Louis the Eleventh, at his side.

“ My child,” said he to the wizen-faced little fellow, “ offer your hand to that lady to kiss.”

“ That’s no lady,” said the Dauphin.

“ Yes, she is,” replied the king, laughing, “ her sex and her rank avouch her such.”

The Dauphin gave her a most scrutinising, unchildlike look, and then held out his meagre little hand. Directly she bent her face to it, however, he put his finger in her eye. Joan could not help laughing, though he really hurt her, and the king laughed too. Therefore, though Mary of Anjou mildly rebuked the naughty, wicked little boy, he looked highly satisfied at his performance, and walked off to his bersatrix. Bersatrix, or berçeautrice, signified cradle-rocker to the royal children.*

* Joshua Barnes.

"Are you aware, Joan," said the king,
"that you have a rival in the field?"

"Gentle sire," said she, "I do not understand you."

"Why, a holy woman from La Rochelle, named Catherine, has come hither, with a mission, as she declares, not of war, but of wealth. You will own that she will be useful to me, if she fills my empty coffers."

"How?" said Joan, looking troubled.

"Why, Joan! will you let no one help me but yourself? As I live, you look disappointed!"

"Oh no——"

"Oh no? oh yes! She too, like you, has had her visions. Her object, in preaching to the people, is to induce them to pour their treasures at my feet; and she has the faculty, she declares, of distinguishing those whose treasures are concealed. She receives

nocturnal communications from a white lady,
all in gold!"

"I dare say there is nothing in it," said Joan, hastily.

"Why, how unbelieving you are!" said Charles, laughing. "Would you have liked us to distrust you in that way?"

"Certainly I should not; and I would fain do no injustice; but indeed, beau sire, this ought to be narrowly inquired into."

"Undoubtedly it shall be," said he, "and by yourself if you like."

"I accept the charge," said she, very seriously; and other courtiers coming in, prevented the subject from being pursued.

A year's military training had done so much for Jeannot and Pierre, who were well endowed by nature, that when they came to kiss hands, dressed suitably to their rank, the king complimented Joan on their being

such fine young men. Had Jeannot opened his mouth, indeed, his speech would have betrayed the rustic ; but, as Solomon says, even a fool may get credit for wisdom as long as he says nothing ; and Jeannot was no fool, though he was countrified.

Joan was full of anxiety to test the veracity of the woman from La Rochelle. As Charles promised himself both interest and amusement from the interview, and was besides, quite willing to realise Catherine's golden promises, he had them brought together the following morning.

Catherine was the complete countrywoman, in sabots and short petticoats, as Joan herself had been a year ago. She was ruddy and coarse-featured, with nothing sinister in her appearance, though her eyes were rather restless.

“Now then,” said Charles, who was prac-

tising his former feint with more contrivance, and receiving them in a plain dress that had nothing royal about it, in a private apartment which might pass for a waiting-room.

“Now tell us, my good woman,” said Joan, “what you have to say.”

“I am not going to tell you,” said Catherine, indignantly; “I shall speak to the king.”

“But the king deputes me to hear what you say.”

Catherine looked doubtfully at Charles and Dunois, who confirmed it.

“Well then,” said she, “you are the Maid.”

“Why, everybody knows that,” said Joan. “I am known all over the country.”

“Should you have known me?”

“Certainly not. Why should I? There is nothing particular about you.”

“I’ve had very particular dreams, though,” said Catherine; “as particular as yours.”

"The voices came to me when I was awake."

"So did mine."

"Why now, did not you say just now they were dreams? Oh, fie, for shame!"

"You take me up before I am down," said Catherine. "One would think nobody could be inspired but yourself. Did *you* like being disbelieved?"

"No, I did not: go on."

"A white lady comes to me at night: dressed all in gold."*

"When you are asleep or awake?"

"Awake."

"How can she be in white if she is all in gold?"

"I did not say she was in white, I said she was white."

* Procès, i. 106, 107, where there is Joan's full account of it.

“Oh ! . . . Well ?”

“She has told me to desire the king to send heralds and trumpets to proclaim that all who have amassed any treasure, be it gold, or be it silver, should bring it out of their hiding-places ; and that those who did not, she would know well, and find their hoards, and use them to pay the men-at-arms.”

“Could not she do that in the first instance ?” put in Charles.

Catherine gave him a look, without reply.

“Well,” said Joan, “I shall ask my voices about it, and if they tell me it is so, well and good : but my own mind is, you had better go home and mind your husband and children.”

“Why do not you ?” said Catherine, offended.

“ I have none.”

“Father Richard believes in me,” said Catherine.

"So shall I," said Joan, "if I see the white lady."

"For that purpose, you must spend the night with me," said Catherine.

"So I will then," said Joan, whose alacrity at once pleased and diverted the king.

Accordingly, at nightfall, she repaired to the lodging of Catherine, who did not seem very well pleased to see her. No one could be long in Joan's company, however, without becoming sociable: she asked many questions about La Rochelle, talked of her own native place, and of the events of the war, tried her companion on religious topics, and also on affairs of the dairy and poultry yard. As the night advanced, she said from time to time, "Will the white lady come soon?"

"Soon, soon," replied Catherine.

After a pause, Catherine said, "War is a shocking thing. I think I shall go to the

Duke of Burgundy, and tell him to make peace."

"I believe there is no peace to be obtained in that quarter," said Joan, "except at the point of the lance."*

She was growing desperately sleepy, and Catherine sat blinking at her; they had come to the end of all they had to say.

"Are you not very sleepy?" said Catherine.

"Rather," said Joan.

"Shall we not go to bed, then? We shall see the white lady all the same, and it is past midnight."

"With all my heart," said Joan; and as soon as she had lain down, she fell asleep. When she woke in the morning, Catherine said—

"The white lady came while you slept, and we had a long conversation together."

* Procès, i. 108.

"Ah, how disappointing!" said Joan.
"Could not you have roused me? I will
come again to-night, and watch better."

So, to provide against drowsiness she had a good sleep in the daytime, and then repaired, quite wakeful and refreshed, to Catherine's lodging.

This time, she remained awake all night, and frequently repeated her question—"Is she coming soon?" to which Catherine replied, "Soon, very soon."

No white lady appeared however. Joan was out of patience, and went and told the king that Catherine was a deceiver. "Besides," said she, "I have consulted my voices, and they are unfavourable to her."

"Joan," said the king, smiling, "no one has seen your council, any more than you have seen the white lady."

"Nobody has seen them because nobody

has been worthy to see them," replied she, shortly. "I am sure you had better send this woman home."

Perhaps she went thither of her own accord, after the failure in convincing Joan, for she was no more heard of; but it occasioned some amusement that one prophetess should be so suspicious of another.

Although it was still winter, the truce was very little respected, and the Duke d'Alençon desired to join forces with Joan and march upon Normandy, but La Tremouille opposed it. He therefore sent Mareschal De Loré thither.

Perrinet Grasset, a Burgundian adventurer, who had quarrelled with his chiefs, and who held La Charité and neighbouring towns, might be tempted, it was thought, to give them up to the king, but he refused. It was therefore resolved to attempt them by force,

and the Sire d'Albret and Joan were sent against St. Pierre le Moutier.

This, says De Barante admiringly, was the scene of one of Joan's finest exploits. Her troops were not numerous; the other leaders were dispersed on other enterprises. She had no Dunois or La Hire to aid her. The siege had lasted several days: the garrison defended themselves well. Several attacks on them had failed. One day, when the French had been repulsed, and were retiring in disorder, the best and bravest of them thinking that they must raise the siege, Joan alone kept her ground, and stood immovable before the ramparts.

The Sire d'Aulon ran back to draw her away.

"You are all alone," cried he.

"No," said she, calmly, and uncovering her head, "I have fifty thousand men about me, and the place must be taken."

He gazed at her, astounded ; but, raising her voice, she cried aloud to her men-at-arms to bring hurdles and fascines ; and they, reassured by her intrepidity, obeyed orders. She gave every necessary direction ; the fosse was crossed, the walls scaled, the town taken.

Grant that this girl was not inspired : how much easier have you made the enigma ?

The siege of La Charité immediately succeeded that of St. Pierre le Moutier. Here Joan and D'Albret were joined by De Boussac. Perrinet Grasset was within the walls ; he was skilful and brave. The town was marvellously well fortified ; it now contains about five thousand inhabitants. It owes its name to the benevolence of its Benedictine monks to travellers. The road to Bourges here crosses the Loire on a stone bridge.

The French were before the walls a month, without doing anything. They were in no great

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number, and the weather was bitterly cold. At length, a false alert, contrived by Perrinet Grasset, scattered the troops, and their cannon were taken.

The king now thought it time to make a fresh movement towards Paris. La Hire had taken Louviers, and was advancing towards Rouen. The English had lost Melun, and were unpopular in Paris. St. Denis had been surprised. The king sent, therefore,—mark you! he did not go himself: pleasure and duty had offered themselves to him, and he did not make the choice of Hercules,—he *sent* an army towards Paris; he sent Joan with it: he did not send Dunois, D'Alençon, La Hiré, Saintrailles, any of her brave brothers-in-arms with her. He saw her for the last time, but he did not know it. Often we see some one very dear, very precious, or it may be much undervalued, for the last time, little knowing it.

As soon as Joan's banner was raised, success again attended the French. Never had her prestige been greater. War raged on all sides. René and Barbazan were fighting together, like brothers-in-arms. Their course thenceforth diverged from Joan's, and, on the plain of Bugueville, the noble Arnold de Barbazan was slain, and René taken prisoner. René had fought like a lion, and was not overcome till he was blinded by the blood from a wound on the left brow, the scar of which he carried to the grave. He was transferred to the tower of Barr, at Dijon, where the Duke of Burgundy visited him, and was so much pleased at finding him painting his own portrait on glass, that he endeavoured to procure his liberation. A year's liberty was granted him to make conditions; failing to obtain which, he, in the true spirit of De Barbazan, returned to his prison. He was then twenty-three.

At this time, the country was overrun by a brave but exceedingly wicked Burgundian, named Franquet d'Arras, at the head of three hundred men, who committed enormous cruelties. Joan marched against him: he entrenched himself strongly, and having very good archers, made a vehement resistance. They all fought on foot. Joan and her men-at-arms were kept at bay. She was opportunely joined by the Sire de Foucauld, and the garrison of Lagny; but but they had no artillery. At length, after a desperate fight, Franquet was taken prisoner and most of his men put to the sword.

The Bailli of Senlis and the judges of Lagny now demanded that Franquet should be given up to the just punishment of his crimes. Joan, on the contrary, wished to exchange him for a brave Parisian, the master of a hotel called the Bear, who was in prison on account of his loyalty. They told her this man was dead.

"In that case," said she, "I suppose Franquet must be delivered up to justice."

He was tried, found guilty, and beheaded.

For giving him up, Joan was much reviled by the opposite party at the time, and is, perhaps, censured by some now. The reader can do either, or neither. The man would have repeated his enormities, had he been let loose: on the other hand, it was contrary to the laws of chivalry to give him up. The report was circulated among the English that she had slain Franquet by her own hand. Never were the common men so terrified at her; consequently, never was she so detested by their leaders. Many English soldiers deserted for fear of her, and very severe enactments were made on this account.

Every effort was made to revive the Anglo-mania of the Parisians, and the Duke of Burgundy again avowed himself the ally of

the English. He besieged Choisy-sur-Oise, and Joan and the Count de Vendôme hastened to defend it. They could not pass Soissons, however, and were obliged to retire to Compiègne, but without remaining there. At break of day, Joan, Saintrailles, and about two thousand men, attacked a strong body of Burgundians and English at Pont l'Eveque on purpose to intercept them.

Sir John Montgomery, at the head of the English, received the first brunt of the attack, which he could not have sustained but for the opportune support of the Burgundians. In spite of every effort, Joan and Saintrailles were unable to relieve Choisy.

The Duke of Burgundy, with his most distinguished commanders, at the head of whom was John de Luxembourg, then besieged Compiègne, which King Charles had left in charge of the brave but cruel De Flavy.

CHAPTER XIII.

“ **J**ACQUEMIN,” said Zabillet, “ what on earth is the matter with Hardigras ? He must be ill, I think, for he has done nothing but howl, these three nights. Have you not heard him ? ”

“ No, mother,” said Jacquemin, “ you know I work hard and sleep heavy.”

“ Well, you must have been deaf, not to hear the noise he made,” said Zabillet: and, taking a step backward, she trod on the magpie, who set up an unearthly shriek, and then hopped on one foot into a corner, bawling out, “ Jeannette, Jeannette ! ”

“ There, I’m always treading on something

or somebody," said Zabillet. "It's plain I was never meant to be a lady. You are more frightened than hurt, Martin, and should keep your toes out of my way. I suppose you cry 'Jeannette' to put me in mind she was always kind to dumb animals. I remember her crying, poor lass, when a sparrow broke its wing. Dost mind it, Jacquemin? She was quite a little thing at the time."

"Aye, aye, I mind it, mother," said Jacquemin; and though he spoke in his usual sober manner, a great, warm tear caught the light as it fell. Zabillet marked it, surprised, but in silence: it was like a drop of scalding oil on her heart,

"Jeannette, Jeannette!" moaned the magpie.

"There, Martin, I beg your pardon," said Zabillet, sighing. "I believe you understand every word that we say. One would think you had corns: at any rate, you remember

the absent, so I will give you a piece of sopped bread."

At this moment Tiffanie bolted into the cottage, as white as a sheet.

"Oh, neighbour!—" began she.

"Dame, if you please," said Zabillet, who was busy with the sop.

"How can one mince one's words at such a moment?" cried Tiffanie. "Do you know that Jeannette is taken?"

"Taken! what do you mean?" cried Zabillet, springing at her like a wild animal, and seizing her shoulders.

"Taken prisoner."

"Oh, my heaven!" and the poor mother stood right up for a moment, and then fell all along upon the ground in a fit.

"You've done it now," cried Jacquemin desperately to Tiffanie, as he ran to seize his mother's arms, "Run and call people—

call father and Beatrix; she'll need two or three to hold her."

Poor Tiffanie obeyed, bathed in tears, and in an incredibly short time returned with her companions, just soon enough to see Zabillet in her convulsions dash Jacquemin, though a strong man, against the wall.

"My old wife! my old wife!" said Jacques du Lys, bursting into tears, and throwing himself down beside her on the ground.

"O Jacques! is't thou, man?" said Zabillet, in a weak voice. "What is't all about?" and she laid her head on his faithful heart. Jacquemin cried like a child.

Zabillet breathed hard, and was icy cold, but she was recovering. All were thinking more of her, just then, than of Joan.

"Tell me," she presently said softly, "all about it. I can bear it now. Tell me the particulars. You said she was dead."

"Oh dear no!" said Tiffanie, cheerfully, "she's as much alive as I am. I only said she was taken prisoner."

"Why, that's nothing! she'll be released! she'll be ransomed!" cried Zabillet, almost shrieking. "The king will move heaven and earth to free her; for without her, he wouldn't be king! Did not she have him anointed? did not she save Orleans? Where should we all be now but for her? Ugh! why, to buy her of the English, the people of Orleans would part with the very clothes off their backs!—or else they'd be wolves, not men. But they are Christians, they're grateful; and the king is a good young man. I'll put on my scarlet hood and go to him directly. Saddle the horse, Jacquemin: I'll ride behind thee. Count de Dunois will let us in."

She tried to rise, and immediately fell back in her husband's arms.

"Thou canst not go," said he, shedding the slow, salt, hard-raised tears of age upon her face. She felt them fall, and looked piteously into his eyes.

"Father," said she, "thou must not cry or it will kill me. My good old man!—" and a shower of weeping relieved her.

"There, she'll do now," said Tiffanie to Beatrix, in a choked voice.

"I'll be stronger by and by," sobbed Zabillet; "I will and must. Or if I can't, thou, father, must go for me. The king will reverence thy grey hairs."

"I will, I will," said he. •

"Yet no, my poor old man," said she, putting her arm round his neck and kissing him. "Thou art not equal to the journey, and might lose thy way and go straying about in the forests, and fall an easy prey to the wolves. Jacquemin is stronger than thou."

"I'll go, an' thou like, mother," said Jacquemin, relieving his labouring breast by an enormous sigh, "I'm best at field-work, but I don't care a straw for the wolves, nor wouldn't, for the matter of that, e'en if they were bears or lions. The worst of it is, that when I get to court, I'm like to turn dead shy, and not to have a word to say to the king."

"O Jacquemin, Jacquemin ! What, not for thine own dear sister ? "

"I could die for her, mother, and would rather do so than not; and if the English would have me in her stead, they might roast me and eat me an' they would."

"My poor boy ! they'd never give her up for a thousand like thee ! You'd be only so many blades of grass, not worth feeding their ovens with ; whereas she is a very thorn in their sides. No, if the king were to offer

them all the prisoners he has taken, back in exchange, with half a dozen or more of his own best captains thrown into the bargain, they'd laugh at him and shake their heads. The only way to reach the English is through their pockets. And, unhappily, the king's pocket is empty. The Duke d'Alençon bought himself off. The Duke d'Orleans can't buy himself off, and has lain prisoner in England these long years. They kept De Barbazan nine years in an iron cage, and then went away, leaving him in a cellar, without releasing him from his parole ! But rather than Joan, the Maid of Orleans, should be served so—the whole world should be taxed ! ”

“ Rely upon it,” said Beatrix, with an air of confidence she did not feel, “ that something will be done. Why, for their own sakes they will get her back. High and low, rich and poor, they all set store by her ;

and as for Jacquemin's going to urge the king to what he is sure to be about already, why, it would only seem officious, and be time thrown away. Why, are not Jeannot and Pierre on the spot? and they are of quicker parts than he is, and accustomed, by this time, to the ways of camps and courts. And then there is the Count de Dunois, who said no one should hurt her, and there are the Sires de Metz and de Poulengey, and there is her squire D'Aulon, besides captains more than I can count, so that truly I think you may set your mind at ease, dame, and depend on something being done."

"Aye, but I want to know what that something is," said Zabillet, "and whether it is done to any good."

"Of course, of course," said Beatrix. "Who told you this sad news, Tiffanie?"

"My boy brought it from Vaucouleurs,"

said Tiffanie. "He had it from a pedlar in the market-place, who said the Maid of Orleans was taken prisoner at Compiègne, which was all he knew."

"Then that's why the dog barked," said Jacquemin in a low voice.

"I will go over to Vaucouleurs at once," said Jacques du Lys, "and see if I can glean any more tidings."

"Yes, father, you may do that, without hurting yourself," said Zabillet, stroking his cheek. "My dear old man!"

And he went on his way cheered by that loving caress and word, though his old heart was well-nigh broken. Often we comfort one another in seasons of deep distress by some gleam of tenderness that else had never escaped our close-shuttered natures.

And now it is the narrator's duty to show how things went at Compiègne.

De Flavy, its commandant, had reasons of his own for hating Joan intensely; consequently, he was not at all obliged to her for coming to his succour before daybreak one morning, as far as her personal help went; though her men-at-arms were very acceptable to him now that he was closely beleaguered by the Duke of Burgundy. And he told this to his wife—to his wife whom he had given abundant reason to be jealous of him, and who was jealous of him now, when she saw this noble-looking, high-minded girl come to his relief. He told his wife that she need not be jealous of Joan, that he hated her with a deep hatred; and the poor Dame de Flavy heard it with a mixture of joy and of shrinking. She knew many bad things of her husband, and there was that in his look which made her suspect that he intended Joan some wrong.

Her jealousy being quieted, she was able to take a pitying interest in Joan, as in some one who was doomed, though she knew not to what. Her husband's dungeons, where there were wheels, and racks, and many instruments of torture, had witnessed many doleful scenes, and she had often woken from troubled sleep, and found him absent from her, and heard strange, dismal, stifled sounds, far down below.

Her pity for Joan quickly deepened into respect and friendship. She saw she was frank and noble; she felt she was pure. It was long since the Dame de Flavy had met with such a character—so humble, artless, and pious. Joan's dress was now rich, her carriage noble: there was nothing of the peasant in her appearance, still less of the vain, frivolous court lady. There was a touching melancholy, too, about her: she was engaged in this campaign against her judg-

ment and inclination, and without her favourite comrades. Also she had a vague foreboding of evil.

"Can we go to church this morning?" said she, to the Dame de Flavy.

"Certainly, if you wish it," said the Dame de Flavy, surprised. "I had thought you too much engaged."

"It will be ill for us when we are too much engaged to pray."

"I will, then, but fetch my veil."

"Where are you going?" said De Flavy, meeting his wife in the corridor.

"To church, with the Maid."

He made a face.

"Much good may it do you," said he, ironically. "It will do her none."

"How can you say so, Guillaume?"

Looking her full in the eyes, he stooped his head towards her, and said, in a whisper that

hissed through the hollow gallery, "She is sold."

"To whom? By whom?" cried his wife, turning white.

"Never mind that. Nor grow too fond of strangers. Nor betray your husband's secrets, even by changing colour and wincing. Else——"

And he squeezed her wrist in his mailed hand till she uttered a low cry of pain.

"There," said he, flinging her hand away. "And now to your prayers."

She looked vindictively after him, then at her bleeding wrist, and then accompanied Joan to the Church of St. Jacques.

This lady afterwards murdered her husband. At her trial, in her defence, she said it was because he had betrayed the Maid of Orleans. On her proving it, the plea was admitted.

It was a beautiful May morning : the scent

of innumerable flowers was on the air. A good old priest was catechising some young children, and preparing them for their first Communion. Some of the mothers were by. Joan leaned against a pillar, profoundly melancholy, and listened to their innocent voices in answer to the benignant tones of the priest. Now and then, the little ones would look round at her with their large, loving eyes. They knew who she was, and what she had done.

“My dear children,” said she, when the examination was over, “and you, dear mothers, pray to God for me this night. I tell you with confidence, there is a man who has sold me. I am betrayed, and soon I shall be given up to death. Pray God, then, for me, I beseech you, for I shall no longer be able to serve the king, nor our noble kingdom of France.”*

* “Elle alla communier à l'église Saint Jacques de Compiègne ; elle s'appuya tristement contre un des

The Dame de Flavy heard and trembled. She could have no doubt of Joan's prescience, and she concluded that every thought of her heart lay bare before her. She could only comfort herself by feeling that in truth that heart cherished no treachery nor enmity towards her ; nothing but respect and affection. The women and children closed round Joan, looking at her with awe, pity, and love. She kissed some of them, allowed others to kiss her, and then said, "Come, let us pray."

That afternoon, Joan headed a spirited sally through the bridge-gate of the Aisne, and fell

piliers, et dit aux bons gens et aux enfants qui étaient là en grand nombre. 'Mes bons amis et mes chers enfants, je vous le dis avec assurance, il y a un homme qui m'a vendue : je suis trahie, et bientôt je serai livrée à la mort. Priez Dieu pour moi, je vous supplie ; car je ne pourrai plus servir mon roi, ni le noble royaume de France.'"—*Chroniques de Bretagne.*

upon the quarters of the Sire de Noyelles, just as John de Luxembourg and some of his knights had come out to reconnoitre the town more closely. The first attack on them was serious, for the Burgundians were mostly without arms, but De Luxembourg held his ground as well as he could till succours arrived from the English: the alarm spread through the camp, and it poured forth its combatants. The French were not numerous enough to resist them; twice they fell back, and twice Joan led them on again, with greater spirit than ever.

At length, seeing that retreat was inevitable, she covered the rear, as they returned to the bridge in good order. The Burgundians, seeing the famous white banner in the rear, and recognising Joan's crimson velvet surcoat, embroidered with gold and silver, very naturally made a rush at her, just before she

reached the bridge. Her men were pressing through the gate, which, by De Flavy's order, was but half opened to them, and she found herself surrounded by a crowd of enemies, against whom she intrepidly defended herself with the sword she had wrested at Lagny from a Burgundian. Her brother Pierre, also, defended her manfully. At length, a Picard archer, taking firm hold of her surcoat, dragged her from her horse; she regained her feet, attacked him, and kept off her assailants till she had backed to the gate. It was shut! D'Aulon, De Poulengey, De Metz, and Pothon, a loyal Burgundian, performed prodigies of valour, but in vain. She was borne off to De Luxembourg's quarters, amid frantic demonstrations of triumph, as if in the capture of her single person they had done more than in winning a great battle. Pierre also was taken prisoner.

"De Poulengey!" exclaimed De Metz, struggling violently as his friend bore him off, "if you are a man, set me down, and speed after the Burgundians."

"Never," said De Poulengey, "till I have seen you in safety. I have engaged upon oath to be your faithful brother-in-arms, and shall I leave you to bleed to death on the field?"

"Your first duty is to Joan."

"No, my first duty is to you; even were it possible I could rescue the unhappy girl, who is already beyond reach——"

De Metz could not reply, for he had swooned, and De Poulengey, with difficulty getting him on his shoulders, staggered away beneath his weight.*

* According to the code of chivalry, De Poulengey was quite right to let the safety of De Metz take precedence of that of Joan. So powerful was the obligation of fraternity of arms, that it even superseded the knight's duty to womanhood. See Mills, i. 121-123.—"A lady

might in vain have claimed the protection of a cavalier, if he could allege that he was bound at that moment to fly to the succour of his brother-in-arms." "This form of attachment was the strongest tie in chivalry."

"From this day forward, ever mo,
Neither fail either for weal or woe!
Brother, be now true to me,
And I shall be as true to thee."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE moon, shining coldly on a world of sin and woe, looked down that night on some strange contrasts—on wild revel and triumph in the English and Burgundian camps ; on a solitary, baited prisoner exposed to the narrow, impertinent scrutiny and brutal taunts of her captors ; on couriers speeding in hot haste with the exciting news to Paris and Rouen ; on De Poulengy gloomily watching by his friend's bed ; on Pierre crying his heart out ; on Hardigras, howling to the moon in vague dismay—while Jacques and Zabillet rested on their humble pallet, unconscious of the impending blow. That is enough for our little picture : an artist might dimly outline

floating figures of pitying saint and angel sweeping over De Luxembourg's quarters.*

From Rouen the news was carried over to England. At Paris *Te Deum* was sung, by command of Bedford. The troops were animated by the tidings that the witch was taken.

Joan's heart would have swelled had she known the day would come when she would be appreciated and admired by the English. This girl was the incarnation of loyalty, the sentiment for which we, of all other people, are willing, if need be, to die.

In the vaulted hall of the old château of Beaurevoir, in Picardy, on the third night after Joan's capture, which is to say, on the 26th of May, 1430, two ladies of distinguished

* "The Duke of Burgundy," says Monstrelet, "went to see the Maid, at the lodgings where she was confined. He said a few words to her, but I do not remember what they were, though I was present." (Ch. 86.)

rank were reading with troubled countenances a billet which had just been brought them. The eldest of these, who was a tall, stately, venerable old lady, in ample, flowing robes, and with silver hair strained off her somewhat formal features under a moon-shaped coif with flowing veil, was Jeanne de Luxembourg, aunt of Jean de Luxembourg, whom she loved cordially.* “*Une vieux demoiselle;*” “*moult ancienne,*” say the chroniclers. She afterwards became, by the death of Philip of Brabant, Countess of St. Pol and Ligny.

The other was a much younger lady, of mild and amiable countenance; she was Jeanne de Bethune, Viscountess of Meaux in her own right, and wife of Jean de Luxembourg. She was commonly called the Dame de Beaurevoir.

“This is quite startling, my dear niece,” said the *vieux demoiselle*. “How could John

* “*Qu 'elle aimoit moult cordialement.*”—*Monstrelet.*

think of sending this terrible woman here? in your state of health too! There is no knowing what effect it may have upon you. Men are so inconsiderate!"

"I really cannot see her," said the Dame de Beaurevoir; "I have always had a horror of such persons."

"There is no need for it, my dear; I will take the office of châtelaine myself, and see her locked into the dungeon, with sufficient allowance of bread and water. Perhaps it had better be cleaned out first; nobody has been in it since that horrible old Jew."

"Oh, do not trouble yourself, aunt; it is quite good enough for such a creature."

"Hark! I hear them clattering into the court-yard. Sit down, my love, I insist on it, and keep yourself quiet. Remember how important your health is to John. I will see to everything."

Saying which, Mademoiselle de Luxembourg, with a bunch of enormous keys at her girdle, sailed forth, lamp in hand, into the outer hall, where a crowd of servants, several of them bearing torches, eagerly awaited the newly arrived. The old lady crossed herself as she anxiously looked towards the wide open door, whose oaken portals, fretted with huge nails, admitted a current of air that nearly extinguished the lights.

There was a bustle outside, a sound of horses' hoofs and men's angry voices: the next moment, Joan, travel-soiled, hand-cuffed, and her face smeared with tears, was rudely pushed and dragged into the hall by a couple of stalwart men-at-arms.

"Oh, do not hit her!" hastily exclaimed Mademoiselle de Luxembourg; "remember she's a sort of a lady."

"Sort of a lady, the witch?" said one of

the men contemptuously, and giving her a violent push. "Pretty lady!"

As Joan nearly stumbled at the push, all the servants, male and female, who had been pressing forward, surged back like a great wave.

"Gaspar, you are rude," said the lady, with dignity. "You have now delivered the prisoner safely into my hands, which was all you had to do, and your charge is ended. Arnold," said she, giving her lamp to a grey-headed old steward, "light us to the dungeon. No one else need go. Young woman, follow me."

Joan, scared and bewildered, did as she was bidden.

"Unloose her hands," said Mademoiselle de Luxembourg, stopping short. "They need not have corded them so tight."

Joan's first use of them was to wipe her eyes. "God bless you!" said she.

"You need not use that sacred name," said

the lady, rather severely. They went down a steep stone stair, and along a mouldy passage, at the end of which the Demoiselle unlocked a door, and signed to her to go in. Having locked it on her, she paused for a moment, and heard the prisoner exclaim, "Oh, my mother, my mother!" and burst into a choking fit of sobbing.

"Arnold, we ought to have left her a light," said she.

"What, to set the straw on fire?" said the old man, dubiously.

"She would not do that. She is quite different from what I expected. How young and harmless she looks!"

"That's her art, I'm afraid," said he. "She could just as easy take the shape of a cat, or a pig, or an ape, as a pretty young woman."

"Fie, fie! I do not like to hear you say such things. I shall let her have a light;

but this lamp wants trimming—and besides, I cannot go back in the dark. So bring me a lamp, properly trimmed, into the hall, and also some bread and water, and I will take it to her."

" Cannot I save Mademoiselle the trouble?"

" Certainly not, Arnold. A proper châtelaine I should be! You are presuming."

Arnold held his peace; and the old lady returned to the Dame de Beaurevoir.

" I thought you would never come back, aunt," said she; " and began to fear something had happened to you."

" My dear," said Mademoiselle de Luxembourg, " you cannot think how I have been touched. She is such an artless, honest-looking creature——"

" Oh, but we know what she is, whatever may be her looks."

" They had tied her hands with cords, so

tightly as to cut quite into her skin, and, as she came in, Gaspar pushed her so violently as almost to throw her down."

"He need not have done that, even to a witch; but——"

"Her face was smeared with tears; and when I had her hands unbound, she wiped her eyes, and said 'God bless you!'"

"I should not have thought she would say that," observed the Dame de Beaurevoir, ruminatingly. "Though, now I remember, they say she makes great profession of piety."

Arnold here entered, with the bread and water.

"You may set those things down, Arnold," said Mademoiselle de Luxembourg. "She can wait." In which opinion, to judge from his countenance as he walked off, he entirely coincided.

"As we came away," resumed Mademoi-

selle, "I heard her burst into tears, and sob 'Oh, my mother, my mother!' It really was very moving; especially as, in her misguided way, she has been a loyal subject to Charles de Valois, after all. So I am going to take her a lamp, and some bread and water; for it is bad enough to be in such a place as that dungeon under whatever alleviations, and I saw something shiny crawling along, that almost made me shudder. I dare say it was only a slug, but it looked like a leech."

"I cannot think how you could have courage to go into such a nasty place," said the Dame de Beaurevoir. "If it were not quite so horrid, I should like to go and take a look at the girl myself, since she seems so harmless; but yet, you know, she might make a spring at me."

"I do not think she would," said Made-

moiselle ; “ and besides, we could take some holy water.”

This appeared an excellent thought to the Dame de Beaurevoir, who armed herself with a little *bénitier*, and was already well fortified with curiosity. She took the lamp, and her aunt carried the bread and water. In the outer hall, they met an old nurse, named Thérèse.

“ My ladies will excuse me, I trust,” said she, “ for begging to accompany them, but I earnestly hope I may do so.”

“ You are welcome to come, Thérèse,” said her mistress, “ and you may carry the lamp. . . . What shocking stairs ! ”

“ Too bad for my ladies to tread,” said Thérèse, “ and, indeed, the dungeon itself is no fit place for a Christian.”

“ Do you call this girl one ? ”

“ I am pretty sure, madame, I saw her cross

herself. Now, a woman may cross herself, and yet be but a sorry Christian ; but, rely on it, she's no witch."

" Well, there's something in that," said the Dame de Beaurevoir ; " but, at any rate, she has been in arms against us, and the most desperate of our enemies. What know we ? she may be working some spell against us now."

" Hush," said the *vieux demoiselle*, " let us hearken. . . Only hear her ! she is singing."

They all listened, with suspended breath, and could distinctly hear a low, plaintive voice singing,

"Aidez moi in aqueste heure ! "

" That's an old Breton hymn," whispered Thérèse, impressively. " My mother used to sing us to sleep with it. Rely on it she's no witch."

Mademoiselle having fitted the key to the

lock, suddenly threw the door open, and Joan, as suddenly, sprang towards her with outstretched arms, making them all step back.

"Oh!" said Joan, with disappointment, when she recognised the Demoiselle, "I thought you were the angel who released St. Peter from prison."

"What should you know of the angel who released St. Peter?" said Mademoiselle, gravely. "I am afraid you are too fond of taking holy names in vain."

"You are a strange old lady," said Joan. "If I were to curse you, as many would in my place, you would say I was a witch; and when I speak of Messire and His holy angels, you tell me not to take their names in vain. However, I believe you are a good old lady."

"The idea," exclaimed Thérèse, "of twice calling the noble Demoiselle an old lady!"

"Why, she's not a young one, is she?"

said Joan, bluntly. "However, have it your own way—it's no matter to me." And she folded her arms, sighing, and looked away.

After a little whispering between the two ladies and the nurse, in which some point seemed debated very earnestly, Mademoiselle de Luxembourg said—

"You are not so grateful to us, maiden, as you ought to be; but,—"

"*Grateful?*" repeated Joan, expressively, and glancing round at her miserable cell.

"Hear me;—you are not as grateful to us you ought to be; because, though we have every reason to think ill of you, yet, compassionating your miserable case, we incline to remove you from this chamber, which is rather damp, into a nice airy apartment at the top of the tower; though many a person, more worthy, perhaps, of indulgence than yourself, has remained in this dungeon for years."

Joan's lip worked a little, but her dark lashes determinately covered her eyes, and she looked downwards, saying, rather doggedly,—
“Do as you like.”

“We like to remove you to the tower.
Follow us.”

The tears now trickled down her cheeks;
but she obeyed in silence.

They went up, and up, and up, all but the Dame de Beaurevoir, who remained below, being unequal to the stairs, and having satisfied her curiosity. At length they came to the top of the turret, which had a little circular chamber of stone, and was quite clean, and almost too airy, the loophole which lighted it being unglazed. There was a wooden bedstead of planks, and a crucifix, which when Joan saw she crossed herself. This was not lost on her companions.

“You will do well,” said Mademoiselle de

Luxembourg, "to address yourself to Him who is never deaf to the cry of penitent sorrow."

"As if I required to be told that," muttered Joan.

"She is rather hardened," whispered Thérèse.

The *vieux demoiselle* gave a look in reply, that said, "Let us bear with her;" and leaving her the lamp, and the bread and water, she left her, and fastened the door, the bolts of which were quite noiseless. She heard Joan try it the next minute, and finding it secured, fling herself on the creaking bed.

Thérèse now thought and hoped Mademoiselle de Luxembourg would descend, but she remained where she was, some minutes, as if in deep thought. At length, she whispered to her companion—

"Shade the light: I will just look in to see all's safe."

She did so, noiselessly, and, with a relieved look, refastened the door.

"I feared," whispered she, "that she might be making away with herself, but she is already in profound sleep. Poor wretch! I dare say she has gone through much."

It was already past the usual hour of rest, and the inhabitants of the château were soon quiet; but a guard was set at the foot of the winding-stair, with strict orders to let no one pass to or from the turret.

"Niece," said Mademoiselle de Luxembourg, next morning, with a troubled air, "you doubtless observed that John finished his note with 'Compel her to eat!' I have just visited our prisoner, but the bread and water are untasted. She was at her devotions, however."

"Probably she will eat when she has said her prayers," said the Dame de Beau-revoir.

Some hours later, the old lady went up again, and found Joan sitting in a thoughtful posture.

"Young woman," said she, "you are wrong not to eat the food provided for you. Are you dainty?"

"No."

"Perverse, I am afraid."

No answer, but a deep sigh.

"The fare, though coarse, is as good as you have any right to expect. However, in consideration of your great and sudden reverse, I have brought you something more palatable. Thérèse, give her the broth."

Joan waved it off, and turned away her head.

"I insist on it," said Mademoiselle, peremp-

torily. "You make a very poor return for my kindness."

Joan tasted a little of it, and then said, "I cannot."

"Try a little more."

"No."

"What is to be the end of this obstinacy? Are you going to starve yourself to death? That will be very wicked."

"Oh, lady, lady! how can you tease me so?" said Joan. "My fate is evil enough already."

"But you make it worse. See, I have brought you a nice bundle of clothes, suitable for your present condition, and more woman-like and becoming than those mannish garments."

"You mean well, lady, but I dare not put them on. I should disobey the voices."

"What voices?"

“Those by which Messire speaks to me His will.”

“This sounds very unlikely.”

“Did not it sound very unlikely that I should raise the siege of Orleans?”

After a pause, the lady resumed, “But may not the voices come from the evil one?”

“By their fruits ye shall know them! However,” added Joan, “I dare say you think such fruits as those bad enough. But the people of France did not. No!”

“I do not come here to discourse on politics,” said Mademoiselle de Luxembourg; “my opinion is, that the less women meddle with them, the better. You can fight, but I doubt if you can spin.”

“Try me,” said Joan, proudly.

“Well, I will, if you will put on these clothes; but only think how odd it would

look to see a person in man's clothes spinning!"

"Who is there to see me?"

"We should do what is right, whether any one sees us or no."

"Just so," said Joan; "and it is right for me to obey the voices."

"I should like to see my way a little more clearly about these voices," said the *vieux demoiselle*.

"There are plenty that would, I can tell you," said Joan; "I myself, for one."

"What! cannot *you* understand them?"

She gave a heart-breaking sigh, and said, "Not always."

"Come," said Mademoiselle, kindly, "let me hear all about it. Do I not speak like a friend?"

"Ah, lady, you do (sighing again), but I am in the midst of enemies."

"Enemies incline, however, to requite confidence with generosity."

"What have I to tell? Nothing."

"About the voices."

"Oh!—Lady, my case is hard. My heart bleeds for those poor, loyal people of Compiègne. I thought I should deliver them, and I might deliver them yet, if it pleased Messire. He could make my way as clear as it was to Orleans. And I have pleaded that it might be so, but the voices do not answer. Instead of it, ah me! that wicked —, whom I will not name, tempts me to——"

"To what?"

"I will say no more," said Joan; and she folded her arms like a man, and remained obstinately silent.

"Well, you are a tiresome girl, I think," said Mademoiselle de Luxembourg, losing patience at last. "You do not know your

friends from your enemies. And as for your voices, I believe them to be only a singing in your ears. Wilful people must take their course, but they cannot expect sympathy. . . . Set down the broth, Thérèse, maybe she will eat it when we are gone. It would serve her right to make her take it as a naughty child takes medicine."

They went away.

"What of the prisoner?" said the Dame de Beaurevoir.

"Oh! she has an obstinate fit. I shall leave her to herself for a while. Her mind is distempered, I think, and her body too. Her hands, cheeks, and eyes burn, and I am sure she is parched with thirst."

"A little neglect may do her good," said the Dame de Beaurevoir.

Mademoiselle tried this plan till twilight approached.

"I must go up to that girl again," said she,
"but I want to finish this bit of work first."
And she took it to the window.

A rush through the air, a momentary darkness, and a heavy fall, made the good old lady cry out.

"Ah!" cried she, "she has thrown herself from the window!"

And she precipitately left the hall.

CHAPTER XV.

“**M**Y aunt is more like fifteen than seventy,” murmured the Dame de Beaurevoir, hastening deliberately after her. “Why cannot this girl await her time? it will come soon enough; she is too vivacious. . . . Dashed to pieces, Thérèse?” inquired she of her old domestic, who was hurrying to the court.

“It can hardly be otherwise, madam: but pray do not agitate yourself.”

The Dame de Beaurevoir was gentle and kind; but it had never occurred to her to agitate herself about an Armagnac.

There had been shrieks of terror when

Joan was seen to fall, but some hay lying beneath saved her from destruction, though she was severely contused.*

The women-servants who had gathered round her were looking at her with more awe than sympathy; while the faces of the men very plainly said, "Served her right."

"Move her tenderly," said Mademoiselle de Luxembourg, wincing as she saw Joan, when touched, thrill like a bird that has fallen from its nest. "Remember," said she, impressively, in a lower voice, "your lord sets the utmost value on her life."

This was the most effectual warning she could have given them.

* "Les saintes eurent beau dire: pour la première fois, elle ne les écouta point; elle se lança de la tour et tomba au pied presque morte. Relevée, soignée par les dames de Ligny, elle voulait mourir, et fut deux jours sans manger."—*Michelot*.

“Where are we to take her, Mademoiselle?” said one of the men with suppressed disgust, “Up to the tower? She’ll only be doing of it again.”

The *vieux demoiselle* reflected a moment. She thought her disabled from a present attempt of the kind, but likewise feared the pain and danger of her removal thither.

“There is a little turret-room out of my own bedroom,” said she, “which would be better for her at present, and quite safe.”

“Dear aunt, how good of you!” said the Dame de Beaurevoir. And it *was* good of her; for the *vieux demoiselle* was a thorough old maid, addicted to a variety of little formalities and neatnesses which this arrangement would sadly discompose. The men looked at her with ill-disguised disapproval; but she was Mademoiselle de Luxembourg, and no more could be said.

"It is a temporary measure, my love—only temporary," said she to her niece, who would have dissuaded her. "You know she must be looked to, and it will save me many stairs."

This was undeniable; so her maids officially cleared out the little receptacle of old gowns too new to give away, and cylindrical head-dresses of the last half-century; boxes, bags, and bundles; and the patient was carried in, laid on a low bedstead, and her wounds seen to.

All this time she had neither uttered word nor cry. When the Demoiselle had skilfully dressed her wounds with her own hands, she said kindly—

"Are you in pain?"

Joan drily said "Not much," and averted her eyes.

"Why will you be so ungracious?"

"Because I know your motive."

“ My motive is a kind one, however.”

She charged her maids, who were working in the large room adjoining, to be watchful and kind to her, and to tempt her to eat; and she herself lingered in the room for some time, and returned to it when the servants had their meals.

When she went down stairs, the Dame de Beaurevoir took her hand affectionately, and there was a tear in her eye.

“ Aunt,” said she, “ I never saw anyone like you.”

“ My dear, there is nothing remarkable in me, except that I am old and plain.”

“ To me you are something of an angel. I never knew anyone care for others as you do.”

“ Try to do the same, my Jeanne,” said the old Demoiselle, kissing her. “ I find great peace and sweetness in it.”

"Here are three Joans in this house, aunt; and how different we are from one another!"

"We are indeed, my dear: this poor outcast has great power of endurance, for which we may respect her; and I fancy we shall win our way to her heart at last."

"We? *I* have not done much that way," said the Dame de Beaurevoir. "I will go and see her now."

"You must not over-fatigue yourself, my love."

Inspired by the example of her excellent aunt, the Dame de Beaurevoir visited Joan and spoke gently and sweetly to her; but she only answered by monosyllables or sighs. Sometimes, when they took her food, she pretended to be asleep.

When this had gone on for forty-eight hours, Mademoiselle, having dismissed her

maids for the night, went in her white wrapper, with a basin of broth, into Joan's cell, and, being uncertain whether her sleep was real or pretended, sat down in the shade, determined to wait till she awoke.

Joan presently opened her eyes and started.

"You here still?" said she. Then, after a little pause, "Are not you very tired?"

"Yes, I am very tired. I am an old woman now, nearly seventy, and going up and down stairs so often does not agree with me; but one can but do one's duty."

"You are a good old lady, I think," said Joan, after another pause.

"Child, you do not behave as though you thought so. If I am very good, you must be very bad, to give me all this trouble."

Tears trickled down Joan's cheeks, and she said—

"What do you want me to do?"

“To eat this broth, in the first place.”

“Very well, then, I will.”

She drank it down with avidity, plainly showing she was much in want of it.

“Why would you not take it before?”

“Ah!” said she, with a shuddering sigh, “I wanted to die.”

“Do you not know it is un-Christian to lay down life before God claims it?”

“If I talk to you, you good old lady, shall you tell again?”

“No,” said Mademoiselle de Luxembourg, after a moment’s thought, “I will not.”

“Well, then, I tried to kill myself because it seemed that the Lord had forsaken me.”

“In that case, you would not have bettered yourself, silly girl, by going uncalled into His presence.”

“No; but—somehow I was impelled to it. A bad voice—not one of my voices—kept

saying ‘ Give yourself up to the English ; you will be given up to the English.’ Ugh ! ” and she shuddered.

“ Well, but you know that was only a feverish fancy, the fruit of an overwrought mind and of long fasting.”

“ I do not know about that, lady ; it may have been so, for I never heard the voice before, and it was—oh, such a nasty, ugly one ! But, at the time, I was quite clear it was not from within, but without, and it seemed to impel me to the window, even against my will, as my only escape from the English—for, oh ! they have a black account to settle ! ”

“ Well,” said Mademoiselle de Luxembourg, after a short silence, “ I do not think you will have any more of these fancies now. Let me feel your hand.”

“ You beloved old lady ; how cool and soft your hand is ! And mine ! —”

"Aye," said the Demoiselle, smiling a little, "mine has handled the spindle, and yours the sword. I advise you now to say your prayers and go to sleep."

"I will, for I can; but, do you know, last night I could neither sleep nor pray."

"That is quite simple. Do you know the Pater Noster?"

"Oh, yes!"

"Let me hear you."

Joan put up her hands, like an innocent little child at its mother's knee, and reverently repeated it.

"Quite right. And now shut your eyes, while I repeat five Pater Nosters and as many Ave Marias."

Before she had murmured them through, Joan was asleep.

Next day the Dame de Beaurevoir was able to write to her husband—"Our prisoner was

a sad trouble to us at first, but now she is calm and composed. She threw herself from the tower, and hurt herself so much that there is no danger of her escaping at present."

The Dame was not fluent at her pen, and Mademoiselle de Luxembourg had recommended her to abstain from details.

"They might trouble John," said she, "and we are doing the best we can, under the circumstances."

Her first sight of Joan's sedate, collected look in the morning had assured her that all was going well.

"What were you thinking about," said she, "when I came in?"

"I was having very pleasant thoughts," said Joan, "of the king, and Dunois, and D'Alençon, and De Metz, and De Poulengey. What a commotion they must all be in about me! I know," added she, presently, "that it is not

very kind to be glad that they are very sorry ; but one cannot help liking being missed. And they will move heaven and earth, rather than not ransom me.”

“ That is as may be. I would not advise you to let your thoughts dwell much upon it.”

“ How can I help it ? And it is better than another thought—that forces itself on me, whether I will or no—my poor, poor parents ! ” And she cried bitterly.

When the Demoiselle mentioned this to her niece, the latter observed, that the best way to prevent such thoughts from preying on her, would be to give her employment. So she went, with a distaff and a good lock of flax, to her, and said—

“ Will you spin ? ”

“ With pleasure,” said Joan.

The lady watched her set about it with some curiosity, and then said—

"I will send you some more flax; but I did not suppose you so deft a spinster."

"Some people think," returned Joan, "that if a woman does one thing better than her neighbours, she must do everything else worse."

She was now tranquil, though she longed to know how affairs were going. She knew that reverses were common to all, and that this reverse was only the fortune of war. She thought of the Duke of Orleans' long captivity; of De Barbazan's nine years in the iron cage—and yet he was out of it now, and fighting with Duke René. To make much wail now, would be to cry out before she was hurt: women were generally supposed to have more passive endurance than men,—she would not be found wanting in it: she would sit still and see how the matter would fall. At the same time, if escape should ever be invitingly open to her, why——

The turret cell had no other access but Mademoiselle's bedchamber. Beyond that bedchamber was an outer room, in which, at present, two of her women slept. There was a sentinel on guard.

One night, the Demoiselle, who always slept lightly, was awaked by a sound of "Whish, whish, whish!" like loud whispering. She thought it was her maids, and wondered what nonsensical secrets they were telling one another. It ceased, and she was falling to sleep again,—when again she heard this "Whish, whish, whish!" It worried her, and she called aloud—

"Pauline! Louison! be quiet!"

Dead silence ensued. But she could not settle to sleep, and she lay thinking over a thousand disagreeable things. After a long pause, the sound was renewed. This time, she thought it came from the turret; and springing

from her bed with great *fracas*, owing to its unfortunate infirmity of creaking, she crossed the room and opened the closet door. All was dark and quiet: she could hear Joan steadily breathing. To satisfy herself, she said—

“Joan, are you awake?”

No answer. Still the old lady would not be content. She walked to the barred window of the cell and looked out on the clear moonlight—it was when the days were long. She could see the waters of the Escaut glimmering in the pale beams. All at once, she saw the sentinel turn the corner, and dart very fast after some retreating object. She was ready to give the alarm, but felt impelled to watch the chase. He soon returned, and resumed his patrol, humming a tune. Probably he had caught sight of some wild animal.

“What business had he to be round the corner,” thought she, “when his post is

under this window? I shall take notice of it to-morrow."

Meanwhile all appeared quiet; the guard was on the alert, and here was the prisoner sound asleep. So Mademoiselle returned to bed.

People rose early in those days, but Mademoiselle rose next morning still earlier than her wont. She had been thoroughly disturbed; and, as her aching head rested on the pillow, her quickened hearing became aware of a low, scraping sound. At first she thought it was made by the rats, of which there were plenty; but finding herself unable to decide that it was so, she arose much earlier than usual, quite at daydawn, when days were long, and, dressing herself, without calling for her maids, again paid Joan a visit of inspection. Joan's eyes were open, but she shut them, and turned about in her bed.

"Oh! you are sleepy, are you?" said Mademoiselle, peeping under the bed. "Why, what's this? Oh, Joan! Joan!"

Under the bed was a heap of stones and rubble, which she had picked out of the wall, just where it was concealed by her bed. Another hour of darkness would have enabled her to make a hole quite large enough to squeeze through, though only to fall to the ground, unless an accomplice or two had planted a ladder, or held something to catch her.

Of course, there was a scene. Joan was very hardened, as people generally say on such occasions, and Mademoiselle was very angry. She said that she now saw it was impossible to place any confidence in her, and that she must be removed into a stronger room. Joan was very hot, and said she had abused no confidence, for none had been put in her, and she had never given her parole. The Dame de

Beaurevoir, who now took much more interest in her, said, persuasively, "Won't you give it now?"

No, she would not.

"Very well," said Mademoiselle, with determination, selecting the very largest and rustiest of the keys, "then into the strong room you go."

Joan was in that temper that she seemed rather to relish it than otherwise, preferring it, she said, to such an uproar.

She thought she was going into the dungeon she had been put into at first, but neither of the kind ladies could treat her with such severity. She was placed in a room the walls of which were of stones so massive that it was impossible she could dislodge them, and lighted by a window high out of reach. Though gloomy, the prison was clean, and she was reminded that if she found it duller and more

lonely, the fault was her own. As security, not severity, was intended, she was given plenty of flax to spin, a kindness which repaid itself, for the ladies had no such good spinner in their household. Here, then, she was left to her own thoughts.

The sentinel, who was rigorously examined, did not give an altogether satisfactory account. He explained his being round the corner, by saying he had been in pursuit of some dark object, whether man or beast he could not make out, which seemed lurking under the wall. When he turned the corner, it suddenly disappeared, which gave him a qualm at first, for he thought it must be a spirit—perhaps one of the “voices.” Afterwards it occurred to him whether it might not have been his own shadow, and, having looked about a little, he was returning to his post, satisfied that it had been a false alarm, when he thought he saw

somebody or something running towards the trees, and gave it chase. There was no time to give the alarm, or he would have lost all chance of coming up with it, but whatever it was, it gained the wood, so he contented himself with returning to his post and keeping a good look-out.

Nothing was more likely than that Joan's brothers, or other intimates of hers, might be prowling about to avail themselves of opportunities. All this made the ladies agree that there was nothing for it but to keep Joan very close, mitigating the rigour of her confinement by every safe alleviation. Joan seemed buoyed up by some secret belief that friends were at work for her: she was very quiet, very industrious, and very devout. The ladies became more and more attached to her. And thus she remained for about five months.

CHAPTER XVI.

LEAVING Joan for a while under safe surveillance, it is needful to show how her capture was taken by foes and friends at a distance.

Within three days of her capture, the Vicar-general of the Inquisition wrote thus to the Duke of Burgundy:—

“ Using the rights of our office, and the authority committed to us by the holy chair at Rome, we instantly require and enjoin, in the name of the Catholic faith, that you will send prisoner to us the aforesaid Joan, vehemently suspected of crimes savouring of

heresy, to be proceeded against by us according to the laws of the holy Inquisition."

The Sire de Luxembourg, who had paid a round sum down to his retainer Wandomme, who was Joan's actual captor, paid no attention to this demand, but desired his wife and his aunt to keep strict watch over her.

The University of Paris, then in the English interest, next took the matter in hand, and desired the Duke of Burgundy immediately to give Joan up to the Inquisitor and to the Bishop of Beauvais, in whose diocese she had been taken. The duke sent no answer, and the University wrote to him again in reproachful terms.

"We fear," said these learned doctors, "that through the seduction and malice of the enemy of hell (*l'ennemi d'enfer*), and by the subtleties of bad people and your enemies, who are using, it is said, all their power to

deliver her, she should escape from your keeping in some way that God would not permit. In fact, in the judgment of every good Catholic, there could not be a greater breach of the holy faith, to the enormous peril and damage of the kingdom."

They sent a letter to the same effect to De Luxembourg. No attention being paid to either of them, Cauchon, the Bishop of Beauvais, who was entirely in the English interest, sent a requisition to the Duke of Burgundy, which was presented to him by two apostolic notaries at his bastille before Compiegne, in the presence of all his knights. De Luxembourg also had a copy. Thus it ran :—

"This is what the Bishop of Beauvais requires of his highness the Duke of Burgundy, Monseigneur Jean de Luxembourg, and De Wandomme, in the name of our

lord the king, and of ourselves, Bishop of Beauvais.

" That this woman, called Joan the Maid, now prisoner, shall be sent to the king to be dealt with by the Church, and undergo trial for sorceries, idolatries, imprecations on enemies, and other similar crimes. And though she deserves not, considering what she is, to be treated like a prisoner of war, yet, for the remuneration of those who have taken and kept her, the king* will readily give the sum of six thousand francs, and to the aforesaid Wandomme he grants rents to maintain his estate, to the amount of two or three hundred livres.

" As the said woman was taken in the Bishop's diocese, he claims to have charge of her for her trial, in which he will be

* Aged nine: it is plain therefore who is the real agent.

assisted by the Vicar-general of the Inquisition, and other sagacious persons, to the end that it may be wisely, piously, and judiciously conducted, to the edification of many who have been deceived by this woman.

"And, to conclude, that all may be contented, the king is willing to pay for her the ransom of a prince, dauphin, or king, which is to say, *ten thousand francs.*"

Sold.

Could you really expect the ransom of a dauphin or king to be refused, when the victim was only to be a poor, defenceless girl? "A pretty penny," Jean de Luxembourg thought, *then*. As for the Duke of Burgundy, who reaped no pecuniary profit by it, he returned to Flanders, leaving Compiègne to be taken by his officers. He is not an attractive character, this Philip of Burgundy, though he was called the Good,

and though he could shed floods of tears on some occasions.

“ Il pleura les morts d’Azincourt, mais sa ligue avec les Anglais fit plus de morts qu’ Azincourt. Il versa des torrents de larmes sur la mort de son père; puis, pour le venger, torrents de sang.”*

Besides other matters, the duke had affairs to settle at home on account of the death of his cousin the Duke of Brabant, at the age of twenty-six. Having died unmarried, his domains reverted to the house of Luxembourg, and that benevolent old lady, the *vieux demoiselle*, unexpectedly found herself Countess of St. Pol and Ligny.

With her accustomed unselfish generosity, she gave the domain of St. Pol to her eldest nephew, and of Ligny to John, the youngest,

* Michelet.

and her favourite, who immediately assumed the title of Count de Ligny.

De Flavy and his garrison in Compiègne were sorely pinched by famine. He received an awful visitation in the sudden death of his only son, a fine young man of two and twenty; but, to show that he was not depressed by it, De Flavy caused the minstrels to play their liveliest music before him when he went forth. He was, however, obliged to sue De Boussac urgently for succours.

And what did Charles for his Maid of Orleans? Nothing. Where were all her brave brothers in arms? We know where they were not.

King Charles sallying out like a gay carpet-knight one morning, with hawks, hounds, and horns, and a gay retinue, was checked, when he had scarcely mounted, by an old woman in a red hood, who almost threw herself under his horse.

"Take care, good woman, what you are about," cried he. "You might have killed yourself, or me, which would be worse."

"Mercy, beau sire! mercy!" cried she.
"I am the mother of Joan Darc."

"Ah! my poor creature, I am very sorry for you—very sorry indeed," said he, feeling in his pocket, which, as usual, was empty. "La Tremouille, have you a trifle about you?"

"No, sire."

"What a shocking thing it is, my poor woman! I'm sure I feel for all of you. Good-bye."

"Sire! sire!" cried Zabillet, clinging to his bridle, "you are not going to leave me so! What are you going to do for her? She saved Orleans! She put the crown upon your head!"

"My dear dame, I do everything for her

I can, which unfortunately is nothing. I give her my sighs and my prayers, and, you know, the prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Some are born under a lucky star, and some under an unlucky. I dare say it will all come straight by and by ; if not, it will all be the same a hundred years hence. Afflictions are the lot of all ; resignation becomes the Christian. You have at least the satisfaction of having been consoled by your sovereign ; and I hope Heaven will bless you. Adieu.”

Saying which, he pricked his horse and rode off, sending her staggering nearly to the ground, while some of his retinue looked at her with transient pity and others with contempt.

“ Oh, you unfeeling young man ! ” cried she, looking after him ; “ and is it for such as you my Joan is taken ? Woe to you, woe !

Evil will haunt your steps! You may flaunt awhile in prosperity, but you who have spurned a parent, shall know a parent's woe!"

"Begone, old woman! What do you stand here cursing for?" cried a porter, roughly driving her from the courtyard. "If you do not take care, you will get clapped into prison for *lèse-majesté*."

And he shut the gate upon her, but she stood outside for a while, raving like a mad woman; and then, poor soul, her accents died away as she passed down the street.

The price of the Maid of Orleans was paid to De Luxembourg on the 20th of October.* He then proceeded to Beaurevoir to transfer her to her new possessors.

His wife and aunt had meanwhile become attached to their charge. It was long since

* Michelet.

De Luxembourg had been at home: they rejoiced, therefore, when he arrived; little knowing his purpose.

De Luxembourg had a bluff, frank way with him, that was rather engaging, and especially so to the ladies of his house. After embraces had been exchanged—

“Well,” said he, briskly, “I have my hands full of business just now; and, in the first place, have to get rid of my prisoner.”

“What do you mean, John?” said they both at once.

“Why, that I am going to pass her on to the Bishop of Beauvais.”

“You don’t say so!” exclaimed his Countess, turning pale; while the venerable Countess de St. Pol, with outward calmness and determination, but with great inward misgiving, said—

“John, this must not be. The Bishop

has no right whatever to her. He claimed it at first; and neither you nor the Duke of Burgundy would listen to him."

"That is quite true, aunt, but I have listened to him now."

"You must not," she said, rising and laying her shaking hand on his arm. "She is a prisoner of war. John, I am not so young as I have been; a little upsets me. You are under some obligation to me. You owe some respect to my wishes."

"Faith, madam, I owe you a great deal," said he, taking her hand from his arm and stooping to kiss it.

"Then hear me now: grant me this wish, my dear. However the Bishop may try to bribe you with English gold,—don't touch it!"

"Too late, aunt; I've taken it already."

"Oh!" groaned the Countess, clasping her

hands, and unable to say another word : while the Dame de Ligny, shedding tears, and throwing herself at his feet, possessed herself of his hand, and wept over it,

“ Don’t, John, don’t, pray ! ” *

“ Why, what a fuss about nothing ! ” cried he, breaking from her, and speaking very loud. —“ Here have you been coddling and petting this baggage till you don’t know how to part from her ! I am sorry I ever sent her here. Give me the keys of the dungeon, and let me go to her at once.”

“ She is not in the dungeon, John, but——”

“ What, the——” and he swore terribly. “ In the best bedroom, I suppose ; and taking her meals at my lady’s table ! ”

“ No, John, no. You should not speak to

* “ En vain la femme de Jean de Ligny se jeta à ses pieds ; elle le supplia en vain de ne pas se déshonorer.”

—*Michelet.*

your wife in that way. I am much hurt at you, and I have a right to be. Have you considered the consequences of this sad act?"

"That's my affair, madam. The keys, if you please."

"Joan was not very well, after falling from the tower, and, instead of the dungeon, we have kept her in the strong room, which has been much more convenient to us, and she has been very good and patient."

"A better girl," wept the Dame de Ligny, "does not live."

"Jeanne!" said he, sternly, "you disgust me with your mawkishness." This was said in a tone and with a look that suddenly checked the poor lady's tears.

"Now, aunt," said he, "lead the way."

"At least," pleaded the Countess, "do not take her away till to-morrow."

"I comply with your wish."

“ And let me break the news to her.”

“ With all my heart.—It is no treat.”

The poor old lady led the way, trembling extremely.

“ Hark ! ” said she, as they reached the door of the strong room. “ You hear ! ”

Joan was singing the Vesper Hymn.

“ How very affecting,” said he, ironically.

The Countess de St. Pol sighed, and unlocked the door. Joan was sitting on a low stool, spinning.

“ How industrious!” was his caustic remark.

Joan rose and bowed gravely to him.

“ My dear,” said the Countess, in a sorrowful voice, “ you must prepare yourself for a little trial—we are going to lose you.”

“ Where am I going ? ” said she, quickly ;—“ to the English ? ”

“ Even so, Joan,” said De Luxembourg, “ there is no help for it.”

"Oh, how can you say so?" exclaimed she, with flashing eyes. "You have sold me! The voices told me you would!"

"Then you ought not to be surprised."

"I am not altogether surprised, but I am indignant, and I am full of woe. No matter—my hour is come—I will not weep." And she folded her arms and struggled with her tears.

"Dear Joan, you bear it well—nobly," said the Countess.

"Ah, dear lady, you have been a grandmother to me! Pray for me when I am gone."

"You will not go till to-morrow."

"That is a little respite. Will not the dear Lady de Ligny take leave of me?"

"You ought not to expect it," said De Luxembourg, "and it will do her more harm than good. You can see her in the morning."

“And remember this, John de Luxembourg,” said Joan, “that however you may have wronged me, your wife and aunt have been as tender to me as if I were their daughter.”

He turned on his heel without answering, and signed to his aunt to precede him.

“I wish to remain to pray with her,” said she.

“Then bring me the keys when you leave her.”

Next morning, the old Countess was awokened from troubled sleep by the clatter of horses’ feet. Her nephew “had wished to spare the ladies the pain of leave-taking.” Joan was gone.

She was taken to Arras, and thence to Crotoy; where she was confined in the castle-keep, which overlooked the sea. There, she could see the distant downs of England—

that England which had been more than twenty years the prison of the Duke of Orleans, whom she had hoped to liberate. Many strange sad thoughts succeeded one another as she gazed wistfully towards those shores; but her journey and the sea-breezes had freshened and invigorated her: she did not chafe under captivity now as at first. She had a fellow-prisoner, a good old priest, who daily performed mass; and she was greatly consoled by his ministrations.

The story goes, that on the very day she had foretold, the first of November, Compiègne was delivered. The Duke of Burgundy had advanced as far as Noyon, as if for the blow to fall more immediately and heavily on him. He also sustained another defeat on the 20th of November, at Germigny. At Peronne, Santrailles offered him battle, but he dared not accept it.

The English also had their reverses. To compensate for them, they resolved to hasten the coronation of their young king at Paris, and to expedite Joan's trial. If they could prove that Charles the Seventh had been anointed at the instance of a sorceress, he would lose half his prestige.

Henry the Sixth was now at Rouen, under the conduct of his governor the Earl of Warwick (who had refused the charge unless he had liberty to inflict personal chastisement when expedient), and all the great English chiefs were there too. Here they sent for Joan; and they prepared for her fetters *and an iron cage.**

* Sceptics may refer to the evidence of Castillon, the locksmith, who said he took the order to make the iron cage for her, and that she was "tightly confined within it, by the neck, hands, and feet, till her trial began." Cusquel, a citizen of Rouen, also deposed that the cage was weighed in his house, and under his eyes; appa-

For the last time, she performed a journey on horseback, and it was not made too pleasant to her : nevertheless, to one, nearly the whole of whose short life had been spent in the open air and in active pursuits, to be once more in rapid motion fanned by the fresh winds of heaven was restorative, and strengthened her for the long, cramping, confinement that was to follow.

None of the looks and sounds of welcome

rently to determine the price. "Chose incroyable!" exclaims De Charmettes, "désarmée et dans les fers, Jeanne d'Arc inspirait encore à la nation Britannique une terreur profonde. Le Duc de Gloucester adressa des lettres royales, datée de Wye, le 12 Décembre, 1430, aux Vicomtes de Kent, de Norfolk et Suffolk, d'Essex, de Londres, de Surrey, de Sussex, et de Sutht(!) et au Constable du château royal de Douvres, gouverneur des cinq ports, pour leur enjoindre de faire arrêter et traduire devant le conseil d'Angleterre les guerriers à qui la peur de la Pucelle ferait abandonner leurs drapeaux; *quos terriculamenta Puellæ animaverant.*" (iii. 173.)—*Rymer*, x. 472.

she had been used to on entering fine old cities greeted her as she rode through the narrow streets of Rouen. “Witch! sorceress!” in tones of abhorrence, were heard in place of the joyous cries of “La Pucelle!” Missiles flew at her through the air, and from the casements of the old gable-faced, timber-fronted houses; and her guard had some difficulty in bringing her to her destination.

The traveller now seeks in vain the tower of the old castle in which she was confined—it was demolished in 1780.

The tinge of colour which air and exercise had brought back into her once ruddy cheeks, gave place to an ashy paleness when she saw the cage; but the brutal comments on her pallor roused her spirit, and prevented her from fainting. When the fetters were fixed and she was shut and locked within the bars, they stared at her as if she were some wild animal, and when she turned away her face

were ready to stir her up, like a beast at a fair.

After she had prayed a good while, in broken ejaculations, she found it the best way to look steadily and sorrowfully at her tormentors. After a time, some of them walked away, others continued twitting her, and saying things very hard to bear. At length somebody remarked, "She is a good one at staring ; what if she should have an evil eye ?" which sent off the whole troop so fast that she could have laughed had not her case been so utterly wretched.

And then she heard the bells ring for vespers, and in a weak, unsteady voice began to recite the Angelus, till a brutal guard bawled out, " Hold your peace ! "

Then she prayed inwardly ; and as the darkness increased, crept into the remotest corner of her cage, and rested her head against the wall.

And in a minute or two she slept, and thought she was under the Fairies' Tree, twining flowers for a votive wreath, with sheep-bells tinkling close at hand, and Pierre lying on the grass blowing an untuneable little flute, which he said he had bought long ago, in the old days when they all went a fighting, and yet he looked just as boylike as ever; and he said, "Only think of Jacquemin marrying Queen Yolante!"—and then her mother called from afar "Jeannette! Jeannette!" and she started up and said, "Oh! perhaps Dunois is coming to dine with us!"—and she began running, but somehow seemed to be treading on air, and to be going up an inclined plane, and the sheep-bells became more and more distant—so far, so far below; and all at once the inclined plane ended: and there was she, hanging over infinity; and—

And a hand from above, stretched out and took her up.

CHAPTER XVII.

“**S**TONE bars do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage,”

wrote Lovelace : but, *had he tried the iron cage?* The testimony of Barbazan would be more reliable.

Joan was shut up in the donjon keep of the Castle of Rouen—a great, massive round tower, looking towards the country, with little cottages at its base and *on its roof*. In the engraving of it before me, I see a good many trees scattered among the quaint old houses of

post-and-pillar-work. And parasitical shrubs clothe the top of the tower.

Her prison was eight stairs above the court-yard. Her fetters were attached to a chain, which was padlocked to a heavy beam. And at night, another chain was secured across her, so that she could not rise. Three English guards were in her cell all night, and two outside the door. They were low and brutal men, who delighted to rouse her from sleep by telling her the hour of her death had arrived.

She was the object of intense curiosity ; and several persons had interest enough to obtain a sight of her. One of these was unfeeling enough to ask her, since she knew she should be taken, why she had not kept out of harm's way.

"I knew," said she, "neither the time nor place of its occurrence."

She was sustained at first, by the hope that

her party would at any price ransom her ; but, as time went on, that hope faded away. She saw that her captors would not give her up at any price.

One day, De Luxembourg came to see her, accompanied by the Earls of Warwick and Stafford.

“ Joan,” said he, lightly, “ I am come to put you to ransom ; but you must promise never again to bear arms against us.”

“ Ah ! ” said she, “ you are but laughing at me ; for you have neither the will nor the power to ransom me. I know the English will put me to death, hoping that they shall then gain possession of France ; but, even were there a hundred thousand more of them, they will never have this kingdom.”

Enraged at these words, the Earl of Stafford drew his dagger, and would have stabbed her

on the spot; but he was withheld by the Earl of Warwick.

De Luxembourg may really have come to Rouen, at the intercession of the aunt to whom he owed title and fortune, to offer a ransom, though he might be pretty sure it would not be accepted. He might thus not only quiet his aunt but his own conscience.

Preparations were already being made for her trial, with a pre-determination that it should end in her condemnation. On the 3rd of January, Cardinal Beaufort, in the name of the boy King Henry, authorised Pierre Cauchon, the Bishop of Beauvais, to commence proceedings. This Cauchon was the complete satellite of the English, and was gaping, open-mouthed, says Michelet, for the archbishopric of Rouen, as his reward for bringing Joan to the stake.

On January the 9th, then, he began opera-

tions. Making the Vicar-general of the Inquisition sit beside him, he eagerly ran through with him and with eight learned doctors of Rouen, the articles and informations prepared against Joan. To his chagrin, they said the accusations were insufficient: they must not charge her with sorcery; heresy would be the better word.

Cauchon was thrown out: however, he doubted not to compass his end. He named Jean Lafontaine examining commissioner, believing he would play into his hands, in which he was mistaken, for Lafontaine possessed probity and humanity.

But the Bishop, with reason, depended much more on the assistance he should get from Joseph d'Estivet, a canon of his diocese, whom he had completely at his beck, and who was known by the ironical *sobriquet* of "Benedicite;" just as we might call him "that blessed man,"

meaning quite the reverse. “ He was a vile fellow,” said one of his coadjutors, afterwards. Nothing could equal the baseness of his soul, but the grossness of his language.

Manchon and Bois-Guillaume, two apostolic notaries, were to act as clerks, and take down the trial ; and they were charged by the Bishop, in the king’s name, to make out a good case against the prisoner.

Jean Massieu, Dean of Rouen, was charged with the arrangement of formalities. He was a man of integrity and good feeling.

Cardinal Beaufort now came to expedite matters, and carry them through with a high hand. Shakspeare and Sir Joshua Reynolds have painted his death for us : we now have a glimpse of his life.

One Nicholas Bailly, and Guyot, his servant, had been sent to Domremy and Vaucouleurs to rake up any scandal about Joan

that might be afloat. At Domremy they heard nothing but what was good and touching ; at Vaucouleurs, the people, finding what they were about, fell upon them in a rage, so that they were obliged precipitately to retreat. The depositions they made, on their return to Rouen, were found quite of the wrong sort. They were suppressed.

Again the Bishop was at fault. And now he took into his counsels a base-spirited priest, named Nicholas l'Oiseleur. A suggestive name ! Surely a snare is vainly laid in *the sight* of any bird. But the poor bird now caged was out of sight and hearing, without counsel or priest ; no wonder she fell into the snare, when this cunning fowler came to her, feigning to be a royalist countryman of hers, but secretly, for fear of the English. His “limed twigs, spread to catch her winged soul,” were affected expressions of sympathy,

pleasant news of places and people familiar to her in the happy old times, and false offers of counsel. And, oh, shame ! the Bishop and the Earl of Warwick, with Manchon, were in an adjoining room, observing her, and listening through a chink, all the while, to her artless confessions.

“ And, by my faith, she spoke well,” said Warwick, afterwards, “ and told prettily of her voices and apparitions, in which she undoubtedly believes.”

“ Write, write what she says,” whispered the Bishop, energetically, to the secretary Manchon, who shook his head in refusal. “ You ought not to do it,” said he, “ evidence should not be obtained in a way like this.”

Fancy the Bishop’s look !

The poor girl was completely deceived by L’Oiseleur, who shamelessly boasted of it to others. He became her confessor, but he

could not obtain from her anything relating to King Charles. Estivet assisted in the fraud.

At eight o'clock on the morning of February the 21st, the Bishop of Beauvais, accompanied by forty counsellors or assessors, abbés, doctors of divinity, licentiates, bachelors, canons, &c., proceeded in state to the chapel royal of the castle, where the trial was to open.

After many preambles had been read, the prisoner was sent for, and the Bishop meanwhile observed that she had repeatedly asked to hear mass, and that he had taken the advice of several eminent dignitaries on this point, who were all of opinion, that under present circumstances it should not be permitted.

While he yet spoke, Joan was brought in, and he lapsed into a sea of words, which fell on idle ears, while the eyes of those who had not yet seen her were riveted with awful

interest on the girl whose terrible prowess had caused such dismay and hatred. She herself, after a piteous look around, in vain search for some friendly face, endeavoured to learn what was going on, but without success. The tumult during this first examination was excessive, and led to its curtailment—people were pushing one another about, speaking all at once, asking irrelevant questions, and behaving in a very unseemly manner.

The first thing was to administer the oath to her.

“I do not know the questions you are going to put to me,” said she. “You may ask me something I shall not choose to answer.”

[*Uproar.*]

“You must swear,” said the Bishop, “to answer truly concerning all matters touching the faith, as far as you know.”

“Of my birth, parentage, and manner of

life, I will speak freely, and I shall say truly what I say at all. But with regard to the revelations I have received from on high, I will speak of them to none, unless to my king."

[*Uproar.*

As this qualified oath was all she would take, it was administered to her, on a missal, she kneeling down and putting both hands on it.

The oath taken, the Bishop of Beauvais began the interrogations.

"What is your name?"

"They call me Jeannette at home; in France I am called Joan."

"What other name have you?"

"None."

"Where were you born?"

"At Domremy, near Greux."

"Who are your parents?"

"Jacques Darc, and Isabelle his wife."

"Where were you baptized?"

"In the church of Domremy."

"Who were your godfathers and godmothers?"

"One of my godmothers was called Agnes, another Sybil, another Joan;* one of my godfathers was named Jean Linguet, another Jean Barrey. I have heard my mother say I had other sponsors besides."

"Who baptized you?"

"Maitre Jean Minet, I believe."

"Is he still alive?"

"I believe so."

"How old are you?"

"About nineteen, I believe."

"Have you been taught the Lord's Prayer, Creed, and Ave Maria?"

* Elsewhere they are all called Joan.

"Yes, by my mother. I have had no teaching but from my mother."

"Repeat them."

"If you will confess me."

"Repeat them, I say."

"If you will not do the one, I will not do the other."

This seems to have ended the day's proceedings. The Bishop had no mind to let her confess to him, because he was sworn not to reveal what was told him under the seal of confession. In remanding her, he charged her to make no attempt to escape, under pain of being convicted of heresy. She replied—

"I shall make no such promise. If opportunity were to offer, nobody could accuse me of breaking my word, for I have never pledged it. You have painfully fettered my feet."

"Because you have made previous efforts to escape."

Her English guards were sworn to let no one communicate with her, and she was removed.

The next examination was held in the great hall of the castle. The examiner was Beau-père. ("Pulchripatris !")

"Now, prisoner, tell us nothing but the truth——"

"I shall either tell you the truth or tell nothing. If I were what you would make me out, I should not now be in your hands. I have done nothing of myself."

"What was the manner of your life? What were you brought up to do?"

"I used to sew and spin: there is no woman in Rouen that can beat me in either."

"To whom, and how often, did you use to confess?"

"To my curate, or to his supply. I received the Eucharist at Easter."

“Did you receive it at any other times?”

“Pray go on!”*

“Tell us about the voices.”

“At the age of thirteen, I heard a voice from heaven, giving me counsel and direction. I was sore afraid. It was at noon, in my father’s garden. It came from the right hand side next the church: and afterwards when I came into France, I continued often to hear this voice. I felt sure, after a while, that it must be that of an angel.”

“What did it say?”

“It bade me be a good girl, and go often to church.”

“Under what form did it appear?”

“You will have no more from me, this time.”

“Well, but what else did it say to you?”
(Beaupère’s questions are not always given, but

* “Passez outre, je vous prie!”

we may tell what they must have been from the answers. He probably drew her on by his calm, gentle manner.)

“It told me I should raise the siege of Orleans.”

“Aye?—that was a great undertaking. How were you to set about it, for example?”

“I was to go to Robert de Baudricourt, the governor of Vaucouleurs, and ask him to send me forward.”

“Ah!—and what did he say?”

“He said I was a poor girl, who did not know how to ride or fight.”

“Hum! Are you sure it was De Baudricourt you saw?”

“Oh, yes! I am sure it was De Baudricourt. I knew him directly. He refused me twice: the third time he consented.”

“How did you come to go to the Duke of Lorraine?”

"He sent for me, to know if he should recover of his sickness."

"What did you say?"

"I told him I knew nothing about it."

"What did you do then?"

"I returned to Vaucouleurs: and then, with the governor's consent, I started for Chinon, with a safe escort."

"What sort of an escort?"

"Two noble gentlemen and four attendants."

"Where did you sleep?"

"The first night at the abbey of St. Urbain. I cannot tell you all the places. One night we spent at Auxerre. We heard mass there, in a fine church; and there I again heard the voices."

"You travelled in man's clothes?"

"I did."

"Well?—and so——"

"And so we went on to St. Catherine de

Fierbois, and I sent word of my coming to the king. I then went on to Chinon, and arrived there in the middle of the day. I did not immediately see the king: when I went, it was in the evening."

"How did you know him?"

"By my voices."

"Did they manifest themselves by a bright light?"

"You had better pass on."

"Did an angel hover over the king?"

"Oblige me by passing on. The king and several who were with him, knew that I was led to him by my council."

"What was to be your reward?"

"I looked for no reward, but my salvation."

After some more desultory questioning, the Bishop remanded her till the day but one afterwards at eight in the morning. Two men, one of whom was L'Oiseleur, were

taking notes, concealed by a curtain, and the notes were afterwards looked over, and Manchon says, garbled. He himself took down the answers, openly and faithfully.

Sixty assessors were present at the third interrogation. The Bishop again endeavoured to impose the simple, absolute oath, and again she baffled him.

Beaupère resumed the examination.

“How long have you been fasting?”

“I have eaten nothing since yesterday at noon.”

“When did you hear the voices last?”

“Yesterday and to-day.”

Then followed many questionings that led to nothing. Beaupère at last said “Do you believe yourself to be in the grace of God?”

“Not fair!” said Fabry, an assessor.

“*Taisez vous!*” said the Bishop, frowning at him.

"It is a great question to put to her," rejoined Fabry, boldly; "she is not bound to answer it."

"Vous auriez mieux fait de vous taire!" said the Bishop, fiercely.

"If I have it not," said Joan, "may God give it me: and if I have it, may He preserve it in me; for I should deem myself the unhappiest in the world to be destitute of the love and grace of God."*

"De quelle réponse," says the notary Bois Guillaume, who was at work behind the curtain, "les interrogateurs furent moult

* "On serait tenté de croire," says Le Brun de Charmettes, "que le célèbre Pope avait sous les yeux cette réponse de la Pucelle, lorsqu'il écrivit la strophe suivante de sa Prière Universelle:—

If I am right, thy grace impart
Still in the right to stay;
If I am wrong, oh, teach my heart
To find that better way!"

stupéfaits : et pour cette heure se séparèrent, et ne lui firent aucune question de plus pour cette fois.”

However, after a time, Beaupère resumed with “When you were a child, did you play about the fields with other girls ?”

“ Sometimes.”

“ Were the villagers of Domremy of the Burgundian party or the other ?”

“ I only know of one Burgundian in Domremy.”

“ Did not you join other children in fighting those who represented the Burgundians ?”

“ No. I have known the boys do so, and return covered with blood.”

“ Is there not a certain wonderful tree near your village ?”

“ There is a tree called the Ladies’ Tree ; some call it the Tree of the Fairies. It is a beech. There is a fountain said to cure fever ;

I have known persons drink of it, and seen them walk round the tree. Sometimes it is called *Le Beau Mai*. It belongs to Messire Pierre de Bourlemont.

“ Sometimes I went there with other young girls, and we made under it bouquets and garlands for our Blessed Lady. I have often heard old people say that fairies haunted the spot; I have even heard one woman say she had seen them. It was my godmother, Joan Aubery, but I know not whether she spoke truth or no. I have not, that I know of, ever seen any fairies.

“ I have seen young girls hang garlands on this tree; I have done so myself. Sometimes we carried them away, sometimes not.

“ When I knew I was destined to come to France, I ceased to take part in such things. I don’t think I ever danced under it after I was grown up. I have danced under it with

other young girls; but I was fonder of singing than dancing."

They evidently wanted some admission that her voices were those of evil spirits who haunted the tree and fountain. She said—

"My brother told me it was currently reported that I received my call beneath that tree; but I did not."

On their tendering the oath to her the fourth day, she said briskly,

"You ought to be content; I have sworn enough already."*

"How have you felt yourself," said Beaupère, "since Sunday?"

"You see how I am—I am as well as I can be expected to be."

* "Vos debetis esse contenti; ego satis juravi."—*Procès*, i. 70.

“Did you keep the fast day?”

“Is that in your brief?”

“Yes.”

“Well then, I did. I always do.”

An eminent lawyer, named Lohier, had arrived from Normandy, to watch the trial; and on the previous Sunday, Manchon had asked him, after church, what he thought of it. He replied, “They are doing all they can to entangle her, but even yet she might escape, if, instead of saying, ‘I heard the voices,’ &c., she contented herself with saying, ‘It seemed to me that I heard.’ But the trial, in fact, is illegal: it is contrary to the usual forms, is within closed doors; and the prisoner, who is under age, has no counsel.”

This coming to the Bishop’s ears, he was in a fine rage, and exclaimed to his coadjutors, “This Lohier is come to spoil our work. It

is easy to see on which foot he halts!* By St. John! we shall do nothing with him. Let us go on as we have begun."

Beaupère continued—

"Did you hear your voices on Sunday?"

"I did."

"In this hall?"

"That is not in your brief. Yes, I did."

"What did they tell you?"

"They told me to answer you fearlessly."

"Were they angels or saints?"

"They were St. Margaret and St. Catherine. They wore beautiful crowns."

After hammering on this theme for some time—

"Did an angel hover over the king when you first saw him?"

"Blessed Mary! if there were one, I don't know. I saw none."

* "On voit bien de quel pied il cloche."

“Was it in a strong light?”

“Why, there were more than fifty torches burning ! Three hundred knights were present.”

“Did the king believe in you ?”

“He knew me by a sign which did not permit him to doubt.”

“What was it ?”

“You will have no more from me.”

“What did you do at St. Catherine de Fierbois ?”

“I heard three masses in one day, and sent a letter to the king. There I saw a rusty old sword, marked with five crosses, lying on the ground. I knew, by the voices, this was the sword I was to use.”

“Why should you have a lucky sword ?”

“You may well suppose I wished all my arms to be lucky.”

“Were you using that sword when you were taken prisoner ?”

"No, I was using one I had taken from a Burgundian. It did well enough to give hits and thumps."*

Being questioned about her banner, she described it minutely. She said it was made of "boucassin," which I think must be bunting, rather than silk.†

"What was the king's force when you first took the field?"

"From ten to twelve thousand men."

Many questions followed concerning the siege; a subject on which it was natural for her examiners to feel curiosity and interest.

Massieu, the apparitor, who had charge of her to and from the judgment-hall, yielding to

* "Buffes et torchons."

† I said, in the first volume, that the nuns of St. Catherine gave her a red velvet tunic; I should have said the brethren of St. Catherine gave her a red velvet scabbard. *Fourreau* means sheath as well as frock. It was a stupid mistake.

her earnest request, had permitted her, as they passed the chapel-royal, to go in and make a short prayer; which she did, kneeling, with clasped hands and tearful eyes, before the altar. Some one must needs tell this to the Bishop's tool, D'Estivet, who accosted Massieu with "Villain, how dared you let that scandalous wretch pollute the holy precincts? If you do it again you shall be put in a place where you won't know night from day." Poor Massieu was constrained to succumb. As for Lohier,—receiving a hint that the Seine was his destination, he betook himself to Rome.

On the fifth day, she was questioned about Count d'Armagnac's letter to her,* as to who was the right Pope.

On the sixth, the interrogations respecting the voices were resumed.

* See *Procès*. It begins "Ma chère Madame."

"Did they tell you you should be freed?"

"That is not in your brief. Would you have me speak against myself?"

"Did the queen approve of your dress?"

"I do not remember."

"Did the king?"

"I do not know."

"Did not the ladies at Beaurevoir wish you to change it?"

"Yes; and I told them I dared not."

"Did you think you should commit mortal sin in so doing?"

"I thought it was best to obey the will of God. If I had had to do so, I would rather have done it to please those two ladies than to please any one in the kingdom except the king."

"Did any of your companions-in-arms make banners like yours?"

“ Some did, of their own accord.”

“ What were they made of?”

“ White satin;* and some had *fleurs-de-lis*.
But they did not imitate mine any closer, lest
they should not be known apart.”

“ Were they ever renewed?”

“ I know not. When the staves were
broken, of course they would be renewed.”

“ What did you use to say when banners
were advanced?”

“ *In among the English!* And I went
too.”

“ Did not you tell them to fight without
fear?”

“ If I did, it came true.”

“ Were not the *pennoncelles* sprinkled with
holy water?”

“ Not by me.”

* “ Respond : ‘ C'estoit de blans satins,’ ” &c.

“Were the other *pennoncelles* inscribed
‘Jhesus Maria ?’”

“Upon my faith, I don’t know.”

“What did you wear on your helmet at
Jargeau ? something round ?”

“*Ma foi !* I had nothing.”

“Did you know Brother Richard ?”

“I never saw him till we went to Troyes.”

“What did you say to one another then ?”

“The good man came towards me crossing
himself and sprinkling holy water, and I said,
‘Come along, don’t be afraid ! I shall not fly
away.’”

“Did you ever see any pictures or images
made to represent you ?”

“Yes ; at Arras a Scotchman had a picture
of me, in armour, kneeling on one knee to the
king, and presenting him with a letter. I
never saw or heard of any other likeness of
me.”

"Had not your host a picture, representing three women, as justice, peace, and union?"

"Not that I know of."

"Are you not aware that your own party constantly offered prayers and said masses for you?"

"No; but if they did, there was no harm in it."

"Did they not firmly believe you were sent by God?"

"I don't know whether they believed it, but so it was."

"Did not people come to kiss your hands, feet, and clothes?"

"Many, and I could not rudely drive away the poor people, to whom I would rather have done all the good I could."

"What honours did they pay you when you entered Troyes?"

"None."

"Did not they preach a sermon about you?"

"Not that I know of."

"How long were you at Rheims?"

"Four or five days."

"Did you not hold a child at the font there?"

"No, but I did at Troyes, and two at St. Denis. I gave the boy the name of Charles, after the king, and the girls were called Joan. I did it some other times, whenever mothers wished it."

Many other questions were asked—whether butterflies had played round her head at Jargeau, whether women had touched her ring, how old the child was at Lagny, for whom she prayed, &c., and about the pseudo-prophetess Catherine.

How long was she at Beaurevoir?

About four months, she thought; and when she heard the English were coming for her, she was much troubled.

“Did not you swear roundly, when you fell into the hands of the English?”

“No, I did not: I am not in the habit of swearing.”

The next week was spent in reading over and considering the previous examinations; and, on the 10th of March, she was examined, for the first time in her prison, by the Bishop of Beauvais, assisted by his tool La Fontaine, Nicholas Midi, Gerard Fueillet, Jean Fecard, and Jean Massieu. They began by tendering her the oath.

She replied, “I promise you to speak the truth in what concerns your process, and the more you urge me to swear, the slower I shall answer you.”*

La Fontaine began the interrogation.

“On your oath. When you came last to Compiègne, from whence came you?”

* “Et plus me contraindrés jurer, et plus tart vous le diray.”

“From Crespy en Valois.”

“Were you many days there before you made the sally?”

“I came there very early in the morning, and entered the town, as I think, unseen by the enemy. On the evening of that very day, I sallied out and was taken.”

And she related all the circumstances of the sally. There was no sense of proportion in the minds of her examiners, who would go abruptly from an important chain of facts to something quite irrelevant; and La Fontaine now went off to the banner and what was painted on it, which seemed to haunt them all with vague dread.

“Have you a coat of arms?”

“I have not, but my brothers have, from the king. An azure shield, and a sword between two golden *fleurs-de-lis*. A painter in this town devised them. The king did it of his own will, I never asked him.”

“ Did you receive any pay ?”

“ I had and asked nothing but good horses, good arms, and money to pay my necessary expenses at inns.”

They had hunted up the story of her being cited to appear at Toul, and they asked her various trifling questions about it, chiefly to satisfy their curiosity.

Then they returned to her leaving her home.

“ Joan, the commandment bids us honour father and mother. Did you do so in this ?”

“ I never disobeyed them but in this instance. Had I had a hundred parents, and had I been a king’s daughter, I must have obeyed my call.”

“ Did not your father have some dream ?”

“ Yes, he dreamed he saw me going along with some soldiers ; and I have been told by my mother, that he said to my brothers, that sooner than that should come to pass, he would

drown me with his own hands; or, if he could not, that they should. And they were ready to go out of their minds when I came away.”*

On the 13th of March, the Vicar-general of the Inquisition joined the examiners. Then ensued a great deal of recapitulation and cross-examination; still in her prison.

March 14.—“What was the reason of your jumping from the tower of Beaurevoir?”

“I heard people below saying that Compiègne was going to be given up to fire and slaughter, and that no child above seven years old would be spared. I thought it so shocking, that I preferred to die rather than to live.”†

“Was this at the suggestion of the voices?”

“No; regardless of them. But I recommended myself to God, before I threw myself

* Procès, i. 132.

† Ib., i. 150, 160.

from the tower, and what knew I but that He would bear me up, and cause me to live and be the deliverer of many people?"

"Did not you curse Him, when you found yourself on the ground?"

"No, I am *sure* I did not—I will not say I *know* I did not, for at first I knew nothing. I have no remembrance of what I first said. I was confessed; and I asked the Lord to pardon me. I thought I was right at the time, but now I think it was wrong."

"Do you think you committed mortal sin in throwing yourself from the tower?"

"I do not know. I trust in the mercy of God."

After being admonished that if she had done anything contrary to the Christian faith, she ought now to confess it, she said their clerks had taken down all her answers, and they might look and see if they found anything contrary to the Christian faith in

them. She did not think it could be contrary to the Christian faith to refuse to disobey the will of God."

"Why did you try to escape when you were at Beaulieu?" *

"I would never remain in any prison willingly."

"Would you escape from this, if you could?"

"Certainly I should. If I saw the door stand open, I should think it God's will that I should walk out of it. He helps those who help themselves." †

"If we gave you leave to attend mass, would it not be more seemly to do so in the dress of a woman?"

"Certify to me that I shall attend mass, and I will tell you."

"Well then, I certify to you that you shall

* Near Compiègne, before she reached Beaurevoir.

† "Aide toy, Dieu te aidera."—*Procès*, i. 164.

attend mass, but it must be in the dress of a woman."

" Let me have one, then, quite down to the ground, without a train, and I will take it off as soon as I return."

" But you must wear it for good and all."

" Bring it to me, I say ; a long houppelande and hood, the dress of a bourgeoise, and I will go to mass. Let me have it soon."

" Will you submit yourself in all things to the Church ? "

" All my actions have been in the sight of God, and I wait upon him. I assure you that I would not willingly say or do anything against the Christian faith ; and if the clerks can lay anything to my charge which is contrary to it, I am ready to give it up, and cast it from me."

What was there in all this, and such as this, to burn her ? But that was pre-determined.

Those counsellors who ventured to express a

favourable leaning towards her were threatened with being thrown into the river. The notaries were constrained to omit her favourable answers, and to publish only garbled accounts.

After the first examinations, the Bishop, as we have seen, thought fit to conduct them in the presence of a very few persons : he told the other assessors they should hear the substance of the proceedings, which would enable them to form an opinion.

All hope of proving her a sorceress had fallen to the ground. It was needful, therefore, to found her accusation on two points—wearing male attire, and refusing to submit herself to the Church. With regard to the first, nothing could shake her ; with respect to the second, they split a subtle difference between the Church triumphant and the Church militant.*

* “Dépose (Father Isambard) que l'on demandoit et proposoit à la povre Jehanne interrogatoires trop difficiles, subtilz, et cauteleux.”

La Fontaine, however, sought to explain to her that the Church militant, in their sense, meant the Pope, and general councils.

"What are general councils?" said she.

"A congregation of the universal Church," he replied, "containing as many on your side as on ours."

"Oh! I would submit to that directly!" exclaimed she.

"Hold your tongue, in the devil's name," said the Christian Bishop to his subordinate. And he forbade the notary to record her answer.

"Ah! you set down all that is against me, but nothing for me," said the poor girl.

Father Isambard, who was present, came in for his share of blame.

"Why did you prompt her this morning?" said the Earl of Warwick to him. "If I see you try to help her again, you rascal, I will have you thrown into the Seine!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE interrogations being ended, they were reduced into twelve Latin articles; and although one of the assessors remarked on their incorrectness, the Bishop, without consulting anyone, sent copies of them, omitting the name of the accused, to the University of Paris, the Chapter of Rouen, the Bishops of Lisieux, Avranches, and Coutances, and fifty or more doctors who had been present at the opening of the trial.

Their voices were unanimously against the accused. They decided that she had blasphemed God, that her revelations were from the devil, that she outraged decency

in wearing the habit of a man, and that she was heretical in refusing to submit to the Church.

"Here is a pretty affair," said one of the busiest prosecutors to the Earl of Warwick.
"Joan is seriously ill; shall we let her die?"

"By no means," replied he. "The king has paid too dearly for her to let her die a natural death. She must be cured as soon as possible."

So a little quiet, a little care, and nursing were vouchsafed her, but the Earl of Warwick would not allow the doctor to bleed her; "for," said he, "she is so artful that she will very likely remove the bandages, and escape us after all." She herself attributed her illness to a carp the Bishop had sent her. And as she was naturally robust and healthy, and as she did not mean to attempt self-destruction a second time, she got well.

Most happily for her, her faith never swerved from her old friends—she still believed King Charles to be a good young man, in an unfortunate situation ; she was sure that Dunois, La Hire, De Metz, De Poulengey, D'Aulon, were doing their duty somewhere and somehow ; she fell asleep, certain that prayers were being made for her by her dear family, by Father Pasquerel, and by many poor women and children. They could not take these comforts from her : and she did not know Pierre was a prisoner.

And then, St. Margaret, St. Catherine !—those blessed ladies had had their troubles in their time, without anyone to pity them ; they had undergone doleful martyrdoms, yet now they wore their golden crowns, and were so happy ! And the Blessed Virgin herself, was not she pierced with many sorrows, as with a sword through her bosom ? and yet she was now

the most blessed among women! The Lord was with her! And was not He also with many poor, wretched women, who went and confessed their sins to Him, and followed Him about wherever He went, and now were glorious saints in heaven? "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned."*

As soon as she was well enough, they resumed reading the monitions to her, which she might be pardoned for not understanding. Meanwhile the sentence was passed, that for such and such motives, she was cast out of the Church as a corrupt member, and delivered over to the secular arm. But as they desired to have from her a public acknowledgment of the justice of her condemnation

* Isa. xlivi. 2.

before she was executed, they began to tamper with her through her perfidious confessor L'Oiseleur, who led her to hope that if she made certain immaterial admissions, she would be dealt with more leniently: and transferred from the English into the hands of the Church. Her mind was very much troubled; she would fain do no wrong, yet she would yield all she could, for a cruel death seemed a piteous thing.

On the 24th of May, 1431, she was brought to the cemetery of St. Ouen, where two great platforms were raised; on one of which sat Cardinal Beaufort, the Bishops of Beauvais, Noyon, and Boulogne, and a number of the assessors.

Joan was conducted to the other, where, in formidable array, were the notaries and appari-tors, the doctor who was to preach to her, and the executioner with his *charrette*, on which to drag

her to the stake. An immense crowd of French and English riveted their eyes on her pale face. The preacher's sermon was declamatory.

"Oh, noble house of France!" cried he, in a fine attempt at apostrophe, "you who have always hitherto kept free from monstrous things, and have protected the faith,—that you, *you!* should entertain a heretic and schismatic! 'Tis pity, on my life! Ah, France! you have been sadly misled! You, who used to have such a Christian chamber; and you Charles, who call yourself king, have adhered, heretic as you are, to the words and deeds of an infamous, dishonourable woman."

"By my faith, sir, reverence apart," interrupted Joan, undauntedly, "I can tell and swear to you that he is the best Christian I know, a respecter of the laws and of the Church, and not what you say."*

* Procès, ii. 17.

"Make her hold her tongue," cried the preacher to Massieu, who stood by her.

The sermon being ended, she was tendered the form of abjuration.

"What is an abjuration?" said she.

"It is an act of submission to the Church, which you must sign, otherwise you must burn."

"Ah, well! it is better to sign than burn," said the poor girl. "I have always been submissive to the Church."

But this was not what they wanted, and an altercation ensued. The English were afraid she was going to escape them. The Bishop of Beauvais tried to induce her to sign; the Cardinal's secretary and chaplain were incensed at him, and accused him of favouring Joan.

"You say falsely," cried he. "It is the office of a bishop to save the accused, soul and

body, if he can.” And they were ready to strike one another.

“ Silence!” cried the Cardinal, to his own countrymen.

“ Well, well,” said Joan, trembling, “if you say my visions are not to be believed, let it be so.”

“ Sign, then,” said the preacher.

Meanwhile, a secretary had slipped forward and adroitly exchanged the form of abjuration for another, which was full of self-accusations. How could a girl detect it, who could neither read nor write? They guided her hand while she made the sign of the cross. The crowd had lost their spectacle, and the English, especially, were furious.

“ Joan,” said the treacherous L’Oiseleur, “you have done a good day’s work.”*

* Procès, ii. 14.

The Bishop of Beauvais and the Inquisitor then proceeded to pronounce another sentence, which they had brought with them, to the effect that she should undergo, in consideration of her recantation, the mitigated penalty of perpetual imprisonment, fed on the bread and water of affliction.

The Earl of Warwick, of whom Michelet says, maliciously, that he quite came up to the English idea of “*un parfait gentleman*,”* was disturbed at this turn of affairs, and said to the Bishop of Beauvais—“The king will be ill pleased at her escaping us.”

“Be in no fear,” said one of the assessors, “she will soon be yours again.”

Meanwhile she was taken back to her former prison, without even the shadow of being

* Note Michelet’s observation, that he does not remember ever to have seen the name of God in Shakespeare, and scarcely a religious allusion!

under the protection of the Church. A man brought her women's clothes from the Duchess of Bedford, and as he offered rudely to help her on with them, she gave him a buffet.

Poor thing, there was to be no escape for her. She seems to have forgotten, that night, her prudent, old precaution of sleeping in her clothes when in danger. Her guards seemed to have left her, but she was surrounded by spies. She laid aside her upper garments, went to bed, and was too tired to help sleeping. In the morning she found her doublet and hose left near her in a bag.* Her female dress was gone. Her guards looked in on her, and bade her get up.

"I cannot," she said, piteously, "you have taken away my clothes."

* Procès, ii.

In spite of her entreaties, they would not bring them back. She lay in bed till noon, and then, fearing some of her enemies would visit her before she was dressed, she reluctantly put on her old suit.

It was just what they wanted ! “The Philistines are upon thee, Samson !” She was scarcely dressed, when they burst in upon her, caught her in the fact, flew off with the news to Warwick and the Bishop, and, the assessors hastening to the spot, found the court-yard filled with more than a hundred English, who threatened them with their hatchets and swords, calling them traitors and Armagnacs.

Without listening to her excuses, without inserting in the *procès-verbal* the reason why she had been compelled to put on these clothes, the Bishop began with—

“Ah, ah ! here is the old story ; you have been again at your visions.”

"True!" said she, desperately, "I have heard the voices."

"What have they said?"

"That I should not have signed the abjuration, even to save my life. It was wrong, it was weak; I own it! For the rest, give me but a quiet prison; you will find me good and submissive."

The Bishop and the Earl exchanged meaning looks.

"Farewell!" said the Bishop, expressively, as Warwick attended him to the door of the prison, as much as to say, "I have done with her now, you may have her."*

It was immediately decided in council that she should die. According to the rules of the Inquisition, it was not heresy in the first instance, but only a relapse into heresy that

* Ce joyeux adieu voulait dire à peu près, "Bon soir, bon soir, tout est fini."

could be punished with death. Her open avowal that she had heard the voices again, was construed into a relapse.

On the morning of May the 30th, the priest Martin l'Advenu came to confess her, and prepare her for her fate. She was to be burnt alive in the market-place, that very morning, at nine o'clock. When she heard this, she burst into tears and tore her hair.

“The pity of it!” cried she, in tears, “to reduce this poor, harmless body to ashes! I would sooner be seven times beheaded! If the Church had taken care of me, as I was promised, this cruel fate would not have befallen me. Ah! I appeal to God, the great judge, against the cruelty and injustice that have been done me!”

The young priest, who was only twenty-seven years of age, simple and worthy,* was

* “Religiosus et honestus vir.”

hardly equal, perhaps, to the occasion ; but when her burst of grief subsided, he offered her the consolations of religion, confessed her, and administered the sacrament. It was a singular inconsistency for a relapsed heretic to be allowed to partake of it. She grew calmer, and having put on, as she was desired, the female dress once more supplied her, she was led, at nine o'clock in the morning, to the car provided for criminals, and accompanied to the place of execution by her confessor and Father Isambard, who had more than once raised his voice in her favour. They were surrounded by eight hundred English, armed with lances, swords, and battle-axes. The whole town was in an uproar.

On her way to the stake she prayed aloud, so fervently and pathetically, that those who heard her could not help shedding unwilling tears. Some of the assessors turned back from following her to the scaffold.

All at once, a priest burst through the crowd and seized hold of the car. He seemed beside himself. It was Nicholas l'Oiseleur, her perfidious confessor, who had tempted her to abjure.

“Pardon! pardon!” cried he, wildly. “I misled you!”

The English indignantly forced him away; and the Earl of Warwick had difficulty in saving his life. There was a kind of savagery among the soldiers. An English man-at-arms was seen carrying along a faggot, which, he boasted, should help to burn her.

Arrived at the market-place—

“Ah, Rouen! Rouen!” exclaimed she, “is it here then that I must die?”

Cardinal Beaufort and several French prelates occupied a scaffold on one side the stake, the ecclesiastical and secular judges and assessors another. Joan was placed between them. A sermon was preached to her, which she heard with great calmness. It ended with—

“ Go in peace, Joan. The Church owns you no longer, and delivers you to the secular arm.”

She immediately fell on her knees, and clasping her hands, looked upwards, and poured forth such a prayer that even Cardinal Beaufort’s eyes were moistened. The Bishop of Noyon and others hastily quitted the scaffold, and disappeared.

It will be observed that though her courage completely gave way when the news of her cruel death was brought her, she was equal to the emergency when it came; and thus it always is with those who ask for strength of Him who can give it.

Meanwhile, the bystanders were getting impatient, and some of them brutally called out to the confessor, who, in a low, energetic voice, was administering consolation,—

“ Come, priest, are we to dine here? don’t

keep us all day ! ” “ Hand her over to us ; we ’ ll soon make an end . ” “ Remember your office ! ” said they to the executioner .

Actually, without waiting for her sentence from the secular judges, the executioner seized her ! She embraced the cross, and was led towards the stake, the men-at-arms closing round and pushing her. A mitre was placed on her head, inscribed—“ Heretic, relapsed apostate, idolatress ! ”

The wood was ready piled on a high platform of plaster, and while they were chaining her to the stake, Martin l’Advenu forced his way to her, and knelt down to pray with her.

“ Give me a cross,” said she, looking round.

Father Isambard ran to fetch one from a neighbouring church ; meanwhile, a soldier formed her one of two pieces of wood, which she clasped fervently to her bosom, as the sign of her redemption.

"Come, priest," said the bystanders, "will you never have done?"

As L'Advenu rose from his knees, she begged him to stand over against her as long as she should retain life, repeating aloud devotional sentences.

The Bishop of Beauvais drew near, just as they were kindling the wood. "Bishop!" cried she, "I die through you!"

He quailed involuntarily; and she added—

"The voices have *not* deceived me. I have done nothing but by the word of God. Ah, Rouen! I fear you will suffer for my death."

"She makes a fine end," muttered one of the bystanders, pushing away. "I am glad I have seen her, for she was a worthy woman."

Some of the French muttered, "She is certainly a martyr for her king; would that we were as blameless as she is."

"Stand farther from me," she cried to

L'Advenu, as the heat became too great for him, "but still hold the cross aloft, that I may think of my blessed Redeemer." And, as the flames leaped up around her, they heard a call for "Water! water!"—and then a clear, ringing cry of "Jesus! Jesus!"

When the fire had devoured its prey, nothing remained to be seen but a heap of grey ashes.—"Let them be thrown into the Seine," said Cardinal Beaufort.

It was not mid-day yet! and people returned home to feel the rest of that day a heavy, lifeless blank.

When the soldier who said he would throw a faggot on the fire, heard that thrilling cry—"Jesus!" he fell down in a fit, and was carried off in strong convulsions to a neighbouring tavern. In the afternoon, when he had come to himself, he sought out Father Isambard, and confessed to him that he repented having hated

the Maid, whom he now believed good and innocent. The executioner, too, went to confess to Martin l'Advenu the same day, fearing he had brought on himself the wrath of God.

Was there great wail in France for her? Truly, there was, in city, town, and village; most of all in Domremy, and next in Orleans. Mothers and fathers, young and old, wept for her who had been their deliverer.

Dunois and La Hire had for some time been working their way up to Rouen, by way of Chartres, which they had carried on the 20th of April, after a long and arduous siege. Dunois was left in charge of the town, as commander-in-chief, with a very strong garrison, and had his hands full. Previously to this, a very strong French force had marched for Rouen, and nearly reached it; but fell to quarrelling among themselves and brought

their enterprise to nothing. The sad fate impending over Joan had long weighed heavily on them; but "it was the fortune of war," and they trusted that she might yet be released, and avenge the horrors of the iron cage in the field, like De Barbazan, side by side with Duke René.

But Charles—who, if ever sovereign were indebted to subject, owed such a heavy debt of gratitude to Joan—how shall we find him? shedding tears of pity? clenching his hands in fruitless anger? A single line of Monstrelet will here describe the position,—“King Charles, during these events, was residing in his usual manner at Chinon.”

To enlarge a little: King Charles, with everything comfortable about him, was being measured for new boots, when a sudden commotion in the courtyard was followed by the unexpected entrance of Dunois.

“Chartres surprised?” cried the king.

"Not while I am its governor," said Dunois. "I come——"

"Are you doing well in coming?" interrupted Charles. "Chartres is no trifle."

"Chartres is no trifle," replied Dunois, "but yet I am almost ready to say I would sooner have sustained that loss than this."

"Have some mercy on my feelings, man," cried the susceptible king, "and don't keep me in suspense! What loss can be worse than Chartres?"

"Joan is burnt!" said Dunois, in a sad, deep voice, and keeping his eye on him to mark the effect.

"How shocking!" exclaimed Charles. "Are you quite sure?"

"Quite sure. I had it from an eye-witness."

"Shocking! extremely so indeed," said Charles, feeling that something more was expected of him. "Poor dear girl! There

died a loyal heart, if ever there was one ! What a reckoning we owe those wretches ! And yet it really was a relief to me to hear what it was : because, you see, you had excited me so, that I feared many lives had been sacrificed instead of one. Shocking, though ; shocking indeed ! The queen will feel it. Well, I am very much obliged to you, Dunois, for taking the trouble to break this to me. It really would have quite prostrated me, had I heard it suddenly. What creatures we all are ! Here to-day, gone to-morrow, as the Psalter says. That girl deserved a royal funeral ; instead of which——”

“ Her ashes were cast into the Seine.”

“ Really. How atrocious ! That was not the worst part of it, though, to her.”

“ No, truly.”

“ Did you hear any particulars ? ”

“The brutality of some of the soldiers was extreme. On the other hand, many of the populace, and some of her judges, were melted into tears.”

“It must have been very affecting. She went through everything, you know, so well. Looked her part so nobly. You remember her pose during the *sacre*? ”

Dunois made a gesture as much as to say,
“I shall never forget it.”

“And her last words—were there any? ”

“She had previously checked the preacher, when he spoke against you, and said, ‘Malign me, if you will, but not the king.’ ”

“Fine! fine! Just like her. I wonder what the fellow said of me. Lies, of course. But her last words? ”

“When the smoke was choking her she cried, ‘Water! water! ’—the next instant, in thrilling accents, ‘Jesus! Jesus! ’ ”

"That was very affecting," said Charles, his eyes really moistening. "I'll tell you what, Dunois, you must push on her brothers. It's the only thing we can do now."

"I fear it is. One of them is prisoner."

"Suppose you dine with me, and we will talk it all over. Wanted at Chartres? Oh, well, in that case——"

As Dunois passed out through the ante-chamber, he stopped, and drew his hand across his eyes. "I had not thought," said he to himself, "ever to weep for a woman."

How freshly he remembered their first meeting, that momentous evening on the banks of the Loire!—the distant lights glimmering from the grim bastilles, and the storm gathering round them. He seemed still to hear her peculiarly clear, though soft voice, saying—

"Are you the Count de Dunois?"

Joan's influence, as long as it lasted, had been powerful, and eminently healthful. It is hardly possible to realise the purifying influence of a really high-minded sister-in-arms, such as she was, among men who were only accustomed to see the worst specimens of her sex, but who had a taste for what was better, only needing to be drawn forth.

During the first campaign there was a charm in obeying her. False shame at religious and decent observances and restraints was easily avoided by quoting Joan's command.*

* It was the most utter inconsistency and injustice to count Joan's masculine attire as *flagrante delicto*, when it had been adopted by Eleanor of Aquitaine, Queen of France and England, and a bevy of female crusaders, without reproach; and when, as a proof how this martial spirit was recognised in England, a lady in the time of Edward the First held a manor by sergeantry to conduct the vanguard of the king's army on its route to Wales, and the rearguard on its return. The Countess of Montfort is another case in point.—See *Mills*, i. 243.

Her yoke became a boasted restraint, like the knightly girdle. But, as soon as her personal presence was removed, it naturally would fall asunder like a rope of sand. Still, she had done a noble thing in showing what the law of God could do, enforced even by a simple girl; and had she done this *alone*, it would yet have been **A NOBLE PURPOSE NOBLY WON.**

CHAPTER XIX.

ONE afternoon, several weeks later in the year, a horseman, only accompanied by his page, rode into Domremy. Throwing the bridle to his attendant as he alighted, he walked on alone to Joan's cottage.

It was warm, delightful weather ; the insect world were on the wing, and innumerable birds were singing amid the thick foliage of the Bois Chenu. The cottage and its surroundings did not look neat. The approach was covered with weeds ; the barn-door stood ajar, and hens and chickens passed through it at their pleasure ; the paling was loose, and might easily have afforded egress to a broken-

hearted-looking, old cart-horse, quite blind, who was resting his chin on it ; but he seemed to think all the world equally bad, and to have no mind to come out.

Over the house-door hung the gay scutcheon, so lately Zabillet's pride, but which now seemed doing duty as a hatchment. A nail having escaped, one corner had dropped, so as to increase the general air of desolation.

Our friend De Poulengey, for it was he, approached the open door, hemmed, tapped, and struck it with the hilt of his sword. Receiving no answer, he stepped in. The cottage appeared inhabited, but just then empty : embers smouldered beneath the skillet, and milk-pans were set to dry ; there was the old table and the old settee ; but somehow, all looked strangely deserted. Against the wall hung a girl's straw hat, a crook, and a rosary of acorns. Some farming implements

were laid aside, as if not in use, and two shepherd's caps hung on pegs.

As Bertrand de Poulengey looked about him, an old magpie hopped from under the table, cocking its eye at him in an eccentric manner, and then hopped in again, calling "Jeannette! Jeannette!"

"I wonder they don't wring your neck, my friend," was De Poulengey's reflection. "Your one word must be strangely inopportune sometimes."

Finding no one in-doors, he looked into the neglected garden, where

"The thorn and the thistle grew broader and higher," mingled with thyme, marjoram, tansy, sage and rue, and also with wildly luxuriant pinks and roses. A low parapet wall divided it from the little churchyard, where

"The rude forefathers of the hamlet slept."

There was no one to be seen, and De Poulenger thought he would take a look at the now more than ever famous Tree of the Fairies, and then ride away.

There was the little knoll, and the little spring or fountain, and over the spring and knoll inclined the round, arching boughs of the beech, with a faded garland or two still hanging on them. Beneath it stood no young girl in red petticoat, but an old woman sat crouched on the ground, stroking out something on her knees, and then looking wistfully at it and sighing.

De Poulenger walked close up to her, and, after a moment's silence, said, "Dame, I looked for you in the house in vain."

"I'm sick of the house," said she, without looking up. "It's full of ghosts. I hear my children's voices, and my old man's sighs. They're all gone, and why should I stay?"

“Gone?” said De Poulengey.

The unaffected surprise and pity in his tone, made her look up, shading her eyes, which were very weak.

“Yes, gone,” repeated she dreamily, without seeming to recognise him. “First, Joan went. We *were* right, after all, you see, father and I; she’d better have bided at home—then the whole family would have kept together, till creditably married, instead of parting like a rope of sand. I sent the two youngest boys after her, to take care of her. I don’t know where they are now—fighting somewhere, I suppose, for the unfeeling king. They may be killed any day.”

“But you have another son, my poor woman. And your husband, where is he?”

“Dead!” said Zabillet, abruptly. “They are both dead!”*

* “Il mournt de chagrin de la fin malheureuse de sa fille, ainsi que son fils ainé, Jacquemin.”—*Procès*, ii. 388.

De Poulengey was shocked, and sat down by her on the grass.

"Are you come," said she, "to pry and pick up stories, like those spies from Poitiers and Rouen?"

"Oh no, my good woman, I ^{was} your daughter's friend as long as I knew her, and fought with her to the last."

"You may call me Dame," said Zabillet, fixing him with her tearless eye, but without seeming to know or care who he was.

"Tell me all about it, Dame," said he.

"Thus it was," said she, with a bursting sigh. "Days passed on without anyone a-coming nigh us. The neighbours seemed afeared of our great sorrow. Poor people, 'tis said, are mostly kind to one another, and we *were* poor still, though we were noble. But it was dread, nought else, of some great coming grief! Father, he said nothing, and Jac-

quemin, he said nothing, and at last I could stand it no longer, and said 'I must go and speak to somebody, or my heart will burst.' Just as I got to the door, what should I see but all the neighbours coming slowly up in a body, and as soon as they saw me, they stopped. 'What is it? oh, what is it?' cried I. I couldn't stir a foot. Nor could they wag a tongue! I declare I turned to stone, for I couldn't speak a word. Then the curate, he steps forward and begins—'Blessed are the dead that—Zabillet!' says he, stopping short, and catching my hand, 'glorify God in the fires!'"

Here a tempestuous torrent of grief deluged poor Zabillet in tears, and De Poulengey sat beside her in silent commiseration.

"He never held up after," said she. "Nor yet Jacquemin. Father fell down as if struck. It was only that which just kept me from

falling. I knew I could not be spared. It was just a race between them. Jacquemin took a pain at his heart, and drooped from day to day. ‘I knew how it would be, mother,’ he said, ‘directly they got her. I always said I would die for her, and now die I must.’ He went off like a lamb, sir ! The youngest went first. Father said to me, ‘How is he now?’ I said, ‘He’ll do well, I hope, where he is.’ ‘Kiss me, my old wife,’ said he, ‘and say a prayer. We shall soon be together.’”

De Poulengey sighed.

“Why, I do believe,” said she, “you’re the gentleman that tempted her away !”

“Oh no !” said he, “it was she tempted *me*. Her artless convictions and persuasions were too much for me.”

“Don’t say so, don’t say so,” cried Zabillet, rapidly, “I know some one must have been at the bottom of it. See, here’s her long hair,

that her father kept next his heart. 'Tis all that remains of my Joan ! Go, go ! I say go ! and leave me alone with my grief."

She flung herself on the ground as she spoke, burying her face in her hood.

As De Poulengey moved slowly away, he saw a dark-haired girl approaching : her face was very sad.

"Are you going to that poor woman yonder?" said he. "She needs your care."

"I am going to her," said Haumette, "for she deserves my care. She has been a mother to me, and Joan and I were sisters."

"I had something to say to her," rejoined De Poulengey, "which her grief prevented my mentioning. Do you know how she is provided for ? There is a very amiable young lady in Auvergne, the Lady Rosaure de St. Vidal, who is anxious to provide for the family."

"They were not badly off till Jacques and

Jacquemin died," said Haumette, "but there is no one now to do the field work, and I do not know how the Dame will manage. She is very tenacious, however, and it is not every one to whom she would be beholden. She would rather starve than be supported on mere alms, and I know that she would on no account be pensioned by the king."

"You can sound her," said De Poulengey, "and if you find that the Lady Rosaure's intended kindness would be acceptable, you can send me word at Vaucouleurs."

"Thank you kindly, sir," said Haumette.
"I will. Your name is——"

"The Sire Bertrand de Poulengey."

"Oh, yes!"

As he rode across the bridge (for he was not going straight home), he met two plain, substantial-looking burghers, dressed in black, mounted on ambling palfreys, with a sumpter-

mule, and one or two mounted servants behind them. They civilly inquired of him if he could direct them to the residence of the Dame du Lys.

De Poulengey did so, and added—"You will not find her in the house, but under the tree. I have just been with her, and the poor woman is almost beside herself with sorrow."

"Sir," said one of the burghers, "I and my townsmen are under the greatest obligations to that family. We are citizens of Orleans, and, I need not tell you what we owed to the Maid."

"You need not, because I was with her," said De Poulengey, "and witnessed all she did."

"Ah! then you are one of the noble gentlemen of Barr," exclaimed the burgher. "Yes, yes, I see you are the Sire de Poulengey.

We owe you a debt of gratitude too ; but you will forgive our first thoughts being fixed on a more prominent person.”

“ There is nothing to forgive,” said De Poulengey.

“ What a great soul she had ! ” cried the other. “ Wonderful girl ! Think of the attack on the bastilles.”

“ It was wonderful from beginning to end,” said the first, “ and conferred blessings on us that we can never forget. What tears her unhappy end has caused among us ! The whole city has been given up to grief. And now we learn that her father and elder brother have died of broken hearts, and are on our way to know whether we may be permitted the melancholy satisfaction of contributing to the support of her mother.”

“ The thought is kind and very opportune,” said De Poulengey ; “ for, from what I gather,

she will not be beholden to any else. Your sympathy will be balm to her heart."

Saying which he took friendly leave of the worthy citizens, who proceeded on their way, and found that Haumette had now induced Zabillet to return to the house.

The burghers' visit was well timed, and it soothed her to hear them descant on her dear child's merits, and declare that they should transmit her remembrance to future generations. It touched her to find that it had been decreed that the magistrates should walk in solemn procession round the city on the 8th of every May, in memory of its deliverance, and that a sermon should afterwards be preached in honour of the Maid.

When this had produced its effect, the worthy burghers proceeded to say what a gratification it would be to the whole city if the Dame would make it henceforth her abode, and

allow them to contribute to her maintenance. They brought it forward very considerately and delicately, and when she found they had taken this long journey for no other purpose, it affected and pleased her, and eventually she went to Orleans ; but for some time she preferred remaining where she was.

She was sitting, one day, in the desolate old cottage, dreamily spinning and crooning the hymn to the Virgin which Joan used to sing, and which she herself had taught her, when Jeannot, whom she had not seen for a good while, suddenly burst in upon her, with a strange, wild look of elation ; and, scarcely allowing himself time to embrace her, exclaimed—

“ Mother, here’s a strange event—our Joan is come to life again ! ”

Poor Zabillet spun half round, as people do in a vertigo, and reeled against the wall—“ It cannot be ! ” gasped she.

"Strange as it seems, it is so," said he ;
"they did not really burn her."

Zabillet clasped her head between her hands,—at the same instant, a figure singularly resembling Joan, and dressed in a becoming sort of Amazonian costume, entered the cottage,—

"Mother! dear mother!" said she, her eyelids quivering a little.

"Stand back!" cried Zabillet, in a voice that electrified her. "You're no child of mine! Oh, you wicked, wicked girl! To pretend my Joan was not burnt! I know who you are, and I know who you're not! Get you gone, get you gone, or I'll do you a mischief!" And snatching up a stout stick as she spoke, she advanced with such evident intention to commit assault and battery that the unwelcome visitant changed colour and hastily decamped.

“Mother, mother!” said Jeannot, expostulating.

“And you, you idiot!” cried she, turning upon him; “to think of your not knowing a stranger from your own sister! Why, how old would Joan look now? This wretch is in her teens; as young as my poor girl was when she suffered. Oh, my heart!”—and she laid her hand on her side.

“My poor, poor mother!” said Jeannot, putting his arm round her.

“Jeannot, how could you ever be such a goose? *I've* heard of this impostor. She has been taking in the people at Metz.”

“Mother, unlikely as it seems, you really should hear all about it: she says——”

“Whatever she says, it's not *her*,” interposed Zabillet. “Why, do you think I don't know my own child? There are stupid people, I believe, who think all the sheep in a flock

are alike, but you and I know they are not; much less are human beings. Whatever story she may trump up, that woman's not *Joan*."

"Well," said Jeannot, looking very uncomfortable, "I'm in an awkward predicament, for I have recognised her as my sister."

"I never knew such a world as this is," said Zabillet, falling into a helpless fit of weeping; and while he was standing by her, quite at his wit's end, Haumette stole in and began gently to soothe her. Haumette was now the wife of an honest labourer, named Gerard of Syon.

"What do you think, Haumette?" said Zabillet, sobbing, "that stupid fellow has come and told me *Joan* is alive."

"Alive?" cried Haumette, with a momentary irradiation of joy. "But, no," said she, sadly, and the glow passed off from her face, "that cannot be, you know, for her heart was found unconsumed in the ashes."

"The only thing my poor girl had left her," wept Zabillet, "was compassion; and this wicked wretch goes and swallows it all up. I'm pretty sure I know who she is."

"Who?" said Jeannot, quickly.

His mother continued crying without answering him; so at length he impatiently said, "I don't believe you can tell. I'll come again when you're more composed."

And he left the house.

"Don't cry, mother," said Haumette, putting her arm round her neck, "Jeannot is a stupid fellow, and always was."

"As for that," said Zabillet, quieting herself a little, "he's my own flesh and blood, and if *he* had suffered death, I might make as much count of him as another; but oh! if you had seen the creature that made believe to be Joan!"

"What, that thing in the hat and feather?"

cried Haumette. “I wondered who in the world she was. *I'll* pull her feather out for her, if she comes to me with her stories !”

And poor Zabillet was comforted.

This adventuress, by whose effrontery and ingenuity Jeannot was, for a time, imposed on, enjoyed her short triumph at Metz, and married a knight named Hermoise or Armoise. She induced Jeannot to accompany her to Orleans, where some believed in her, others did not; while poor Pierre, whose wish was father to his thought, vacillated between two opinions. The likeness was extraordinary. At length, King Charles, who heard that “une autre Pucelle affectée, qui moult ressembloit à la première,” had appeared, desired that she should be brought before him.

He received her in his garden, sitting under a trellis. He had hurt his foot, and was wearing an easy slipper; and he desired one

of his gentlemen in waiting to advance and receive her as if the king, which he did; but she, being too shrewd for him, and knowing, perhaps, that Charles had hurt his foot, went straight up to him; “en la saluant bien doulcement.” Instead of any lively demonstration of surprise and joy on the occasion, Charles composedly said—

“*Pucelle, ma mie*, you are welcome. And pray what about that secret countersign which the Lord put between you and me?”

Upon which, down dropped the false Pucelle upon her knees before him, crying for mercy, and owning herself an impostor. She was chidden very sharply, and sent away in disgrace.

She does not seem to have been quieted by this, but to have continued her extraordinary personation, till the parliament of Paris took it up. This was in the autumn of 1440;

they sent for her to Paris, and there made her stand, whether she would or no, on a stone pedestal before the palace, in the sight of all the people, while a declaration was read, reciting all the particulars of her real history, and stating that early in life she had been sent to Rome for striking her mother, and there, assuming male attire, had fought a duel in behalf of Pope Eugenius, and killed two men in single combat ; that she was now the wife of a knight, and the mother of two sons.

Sorrow does not often kill, though it killed Jacques and Jacquemin. Zabillet lived upwards of twenty years in Orleans, a marked and respected woman, and the recipient of unremitting kindness. She had a trifle of her own, or from her sons, to which the city of Orleans added three francs a month, “pour lui aider à vivre.” She was too independent

to be willing to accept more than her simple habits required ; so she was no great burthen on the town.*

Jeannot had continued fighting for the king till 1436, when he returned to Lorraine in consequence of the extraordinary report that his sister had reappeared. About this time, King Charles made him Provost of Vaucouleurs ; and he continued to hold this office till 1467, when Louis the Eleventh bought it of him to bestow it on the Duke of Calabria.†

As for Pierre, he remained long years in captivity, but was released at last, and knighted. He married and settled in Orleans. The old feud between the houses of Burgundy and Orleans was at length ended by the Duke of Burgundy paying the ransom of the

* She died, Nov. 28, 1458.

† Procès, ii. 74.

Duke of Orleans, and thus terminating his twenty-five years' captivity in England. In consideration of the services Orleans had received from Joan and her brothers, the released Duke bestowed on "Messire Pierre du Lys, chevalier, L'Isle aux Bœufs, near Orleans, inasmuch as in company with his sister, Joan the Maid, he had left his native place, and exposed his person and goods in resisting the ancient enemies of the kingdom who were then besieging the city of Orleans, as well as for performing many journeys for the service of the king and his chiefs."

Pierre had two sons and a daughter. Two of them were named in memory of his lost sister. His daughter was named Joan; he bestowed L'Isle aux Bœufs on her as her wedding portion: she afterwards made it over to her brother, Jean de la Pucelle. Her other brother was also named Jean or Jeannot;

he was made a magistrate of Arras in 1481, by Louis the Eleventh.

It was Louis the Eleventh who erected over the cottage door at Domremy, the pointed Gothic heading in yellowish stone, enclosing as in a frame the family scutcheons seen there to this day, under which is the shield of France, with three *fleurs-de-lis*, and “Vive le roy Louis.” There is now also a beautiful little stone niche, nearly half-way up the front of the cottage, containing a statue of Joan kneeling in prayer;* and a bronze copy of the Princess Marie’s charming statue within the cottage, presented by Louis Philippe.

The English reaped no benefit by Joan’s death. The tide of success began to set steadily in Charles’s favour. In 1435, the Duke of Burgundy forsook them for the

* Musgrave’s Dauphiné.

French king. The Duke of Bedford died of vexation. Civil wars in England drew off the English from France; and in 1437 Charles made his public entry into Paris. In 1440 a truce was agreed on between England and France, which lasted eight years. During this interval Charles reigned well, and would have been happy, had not the wicked young Dauphin been a thorn in his side.

In 1448 the war was renewed to the disadvantage of the English. Their only great commander now left was Lord Talbot; and he and his son were both slain at Chatillon in 1453, as Shakspeare has pathetically recorded. This defeat was followed by the expulsion of the English from every French town except Calais; which we lost in the time of Queen Mary.

Even before this grateful breathing time

had fully arrived, Charles, finding himself master of Rouen, wherein was a certain market-place, wherein, about twenty years before, a certain young girl had been burnt alive, he, considering her trial had been grossly misconducted, determined to have a revision of it, and to call forward all the living witnesses that could be found.

So he issued letters patent to his well-beloved Guillaume Bouillé, empowering and commissioning him to constrain every one to bring forward whatever information they could adduce on the subject.

CHAPTER XX.

IN consequence of this, the prince of the blood and the lowly peasant, the captain, the curate, the squire, the page, priest and friar-hermit, noble sire and humble charcoal-seller, the wife of the royal treasurer and the wife of the simple bourgeois, upwards of sixty witnesses of one class and another, came forward with their testimonies.

These depositions were not all taken at once; some of them were repeated three or four times, first before Bouillé, next before Cardinal d'Estouteville, then before the grand vicar, Philippe de la Rose. The proceedings were tedious and desultory, till a papal brief

was issued in June, 1455, authorising the Archbishop of Rouen, the Bishops of Paris and Coutances, and an inquisitor, to conduct the inquiry, and pronounce a true and faithful verdict.

A public sitting was held in the palace of the Bishop of Paris, on the 17th of the ensuing November. Prelates, abbés, doctors of theology, and a crowded audience were present.

A sensation was created by the sudden entrance of Zabillet, in deep mourning, carrying a paper in her hand, and accompanied by her two sons. She was followed by her counsel Maugier.

With many a deep-drawn sigh, she stated that she was the mother of Joan, that she had brought her up in the love and fear of God; that her daughter's daily toil had been in the fields and meadows, that she had been punctual and devout in her attendance at

church, had confessed and communicated every month, and had observed the prescribed fasts. That she had never said or done anything contrary to the faith, yet that her enemies had falsely imputed crimes to her, to the disgrace of her family and the peril of their own souls.

Zabillet having made this deposition in a faltering and broken voice, her counsel took up the word, and read aloud the appeal of herself and sons for justice.

What a solemn farce this would have been, had they known Joan to be alive all the while !

The judges then withdrew with Zabillet into a private room, where they conferred with her more quietly.

Returning to the hall, they caused the Latin brief to be read. Maugier then obtained leave to speak, though he was told it was out of order at this stage of the proceedings. He

read the brief in French, and explained that it was not intended to arraign the judgment of the parliament of Paris, but only of the Bishop of Beauvais; the Vice-Inquisitor Le Maistre, Estivet, and their accomplices. After preliminaries were adjusted, the court adjourned till the 12th of December, when it was to reassemble at Rouen ; and the present Bishop of Beauvais was cited to appear at it, as representative of Cauchon, as also the representatives of Le Maistre and Estivet—for all these men were dead ! The citations were affixed to the church doors.

The depositions of the witnesses were received in four different places—at Rouen, at Domremy, at Orleans, and at Paris. A long list of queries was drawn up which each witness had to answer on oath, besides giving all the general information in his power.

Joan's trial was pronounced illegal on the

following counts. She had never slept in the diocese of Beauvais, and was not under the Bishop's jurisdiction; she was not amenable to the Inquisition; she was denied what she asked for, that her judges should be of the party of King Charles as well as of King Henry; she was denied a counsel to defend her, though she was under age. Also Joan had been represented as saying things she never said, and many things she did say were suppressed. Finally, it was declared that Joan's pretended abjuration at St. Ouen was false, and artfully substituted for the three or four lines to which she had supposed she was subscribing.

It was maintained that her accusation was false in itself. Joan had been upright and pure all her life, and had never once been detected in a falsehood. The horrors of her prison were revealed; the evil characters of

those about her, the deceits that were practised on her, the unmanly threats, the removal of her woman's clothes so that she was compelled to put on the only ones that were left her ; the pains that were taken to heal her of her sickness, in order that she might not escape a cruel death.

It was then undertaken to defend her adoption of male attire, and her reliance on the voices. And it was demanded that she should be declared innocent, loyal, Catholic, faithful *unto death*; that the iniquitous sentence against her should be burnt; that its reversal should be published in every city in the kingdom; and that masses should be performed *for the soul of the defunct*. (Likely if she were alive !) The minutes of the revision were to be placed among the royal records, and would thereby afford proofs of all that had previously been alleged.

It would take too long to show how the foregoing points were substantiated, and the allegations of Joan's enemies triumphantly refuted. It is more interesting to us to watch the crowd of illustrious persons who press forward to speak in her praise.

The first that claims our notice, is John, Count of Dunois and Longueville, Marshal of France. Worn and embrowned by twenty-five more years' campaigning, there is the old spirit in him, as he says:—

“ I think that Joan was sent by God! Her deeds during the war bore more truly the mark of inspiration than of mere human wisdom.”

And he recapitulates the story of the war. How fresh are his recollections! how vivid his impressions! He recalls Joan's very words, from their meeting on the Loire; he is a good word-painter, and gives the gesture, look, and tone.

The Duke d'Alençon, too, speaks up for her, and repeats her words and deeds, as I have given them in their place.

D'Aulon is now Seneschal of Beaucaire. His testimony is important and highly satisfactory; for he was in such close attendance on her that he must have detected deceit or wrong. He came forward a second time to repeat and insist on his belief that she must have been specially sent and taught of God.

Louis de Contes is no longer the idle boy whom Joan scolded for playing at the door when she was wanting her horse. He is a handsome chevalier of five or six and thirty, and will soon be Seigneur of Rouyen and Dengles. His recollections are clear and to the purpose.

That white-headed, spare old general, eighty-five years of age, is De Gaucourt, who deposes to the sudden change of the wind when Joan

embarked for Orleans : he thinks it was providential, in the full meaning of the word.

Sir William de Ricarville comes forward to say, that considering her deeds and her manner of living (*attendu sa manière de vivre et ses faits*), she was inspired by God.

Father Pásquerel is of the same opinion. His recollections of her are full of interest.

Le Royer, the charcoal-seller, tells how Joan came to his house and stayed there till she started for Chinon. Catherine his wife, Durand Laxart, the three godmothers, her godfather Jean Morel, Haumette and Manette her friends, the village priest, each add their links to the chain, and supply the idyll of her young life.

Then comes De Metz. He tells of his meeting the young girl at Vaucouleurs, and saying to her—" *Ma mie, what is this you are doing?*" —and of what she said, and he said, and she

said again ; and he told of their journey and its dangers, and how they brought her to Chinon ; where they were asked plenty of questions.

“ She was good,” said De Metz ; “ she was simple, devout, a true Christian ; kind and generous to the poor, fearing God, and of good conditions.”

De Poulengy has the same story to tell : we know it already. He believes she was divinely inspired ; he knows no ill of her, but a great deal of good. She was good and holy in her walk and conversation.

The Dame de la Touroulde relates how she devoted herself to prayer and almsdeeds while under her roof. Colette Bouchier testifies to her pure life while her guest at Orleans.

The witness of the venerable and religious Father Toutmouillé is fuller and more touching :—

“ I accompanied Brother Martin l’Advenu

to the prison on the morning that Joan was to be burnt. When Brother Martin told the poor girl of the cruel death she was to die that very morning, she began to tear her hair and cry aloud so mournfully that it was piteous to hear her. ‘Alas,’ said she, ‘must this poor body be reduced to ashes? Ha! a! I would sooner be beheaded seven times over! Oh! if I had been in the ecclesiastical prison, where I should have been under the protection of the Church, this miserable fate would not have awaited me; but as it is now, oh! I appeal to God, the great judge, against the wrongs that have been done me!’ Sirs, her complaints were woful, and when the Bishop appeared, ‘Bishop!’ cried she, ‘I die through you! ’’

This witness hastily retreated from court, overcome by his feelings.

Father Isambard tells how she was urged

to recant; and how, when he tried to help her out of a difficulty, the Bishop turned fiercely upon him, with—

“Taisez vous, de par le dyable!”

Moreover, the English threatened him awfully, and said they would throw him into the Seine.

“Never did Christian make a better end! Her prayers and her ejaculations were so piteous, devout, and Catholic, that even Cardinal Beaufort had tears in his eyes. She humbly begged me, when at the stake, to fetch a crucifix from the nearest church, and hold it up before her till she was dead, that the cross on which the Lord hung might be continually in her sight to the last. Nor did she cease, amidst the flames, to call aloud upon Him, invoking Him to her latest breath. At length she dropped her head on her breast, breathing out the name of Jesus.

“And oh, sirs ! that same afternoon, the executioner came to me and to Brother Martin, shaken and torn with a marvellous repentance and terrible contrition,* like a despairing man, fearing never by any means to obtain the pardon of God for what he had done to this sainted girl. And he said and declared, did this executioner, that notwithstanding the oil, the sulphur, and the coal that he had placed among the wood, to consume her more completely, he found her heart remaining unburnt amid the ashes.”

As if this were not enough, then comes Martin l'Advenu himself. Fancy you hear his still, clear voice, and see his pale, worn face, and earnest eye.

“The Bishop was resolved to go any lengths to please the English. When Joan

* Procès, ii. 7.

had committed herself by putting on the forbidden clothes, he *laughed* as he took leave of the Earl of Warwick, and said—

“‘Farowelle ! farowelle ! *il en est fait ! faites bonne chère !*’ or words to that effect.

“Yes, sirs, indeed he did. And they had beaten and hurt the poor girl shamefully.* . . . And another thing I will tell you. When she was preached at, the last time, and about to be abandoned to the secular arm, before ever the secular judges pronounced one word of sentence, she was roughly hurried to the stake by two sergeants, and delivered by them to the executioner ! It was made use of, soon after, as a precedent !

“About four of the clock that afternoon came the executioner in great tribulation to Brother Isambard and me, saying he had

* “Molestée, *bastue*, et tourmentée.”

never in his life suffered so much in putting to death any criminal—first, on account of her great renown and reputation, and secondly on account of the cruel way in which he had to bind and secure her; for the judges overlooked him from a high scaffold, so that he could not avail himself of any means to alleviate or shorten her sufferings, which filled him with pity and compunction."

Then came Duval and Manchon, whose depositions were full of pathos. "Ah!" said Manchon, in conclusion, "how patiently she heard that long sermon! and how touchingly she prayed afterwards! I never cried so much in my life. For a month afterwards I could not get over it. I went and bought myself a little missal, to use in praying for her soul—I have it still."

Another comes,—another, and another; and thus are the manes of the injured girl at length

appeased by the tardy justice and gratitude of her rescued land : and thus we may picture the shade of her mail-clad figure, on the slightly raised pedestal of her fame, clasping her sword to her heart, and looking down, sweetly and sadly, on the long array of gentle and simple as they file by her, one moment in the sunlight, and then passing on into the dark : each noble declaring, “Innocent, upon my honour !” with his hand upon his heart ; and each peasant confirming the goodness of “nostre Jehanne !”

What shall we think of the voices ?

“It is the business of history,” says Hume (an unsafe guide), “to distinguish between the miraculous and the marvellous : to reject the first in *all* narratives profane and human ; to doubt the second ; and when obliged by unquestionable testimony, as in the present case,

—to receive as little of it as is consistent with the known facts and circumstances.”

Receive as little of it? Of *unquestionable* testimony? I think we may receive all unquestionable testimony, at any rate.

Suppose we say, “It is the business of history to distinguish between the miraculous and the *providential*.” This simplifies the question a good deal.

Granting that the set time was come for the English to leave France, our Heavenly Father might cause them to do so by means natural, preternatural, or supernatural, without recurring to unnatural means. But is there the man alive who can precisely define the boundaries between the natural, preternatural, and supernatural? We *all* see through a glass, darkly. Sir Isaac Newton has said, “God acts in what is called Nature, according to accurate and uniform laws, *nisi ubi aliter agere bonum est*,—

except when it is good for Him to act otherwise." So, St. Augustine,—"Dei voluntas rerum natura est." (The will of God is the cause of nature.) Remember what Nicholls says, in his "Architecture of the Heavens," about what is called (for want of a name), "the planetary system," being nothing more (or less) than "the will of God." "A Faraday is from day to day melting down into one the various forms and operations of what is called the electric fluid. But when, at last, that one agency is ascertained, to what cause can we ultimately assign it but the will of God?"*

The voices, then, may have been preternatural or supernatural, we need not say they were more; dare we say they were less?

Barante and Michelet—Frenchmen and Roman Catholics—naturally accept Joan's in-

* *Quarterly Review*, Oct., 1861.

spiration without the slightest hesitation. It is only a stumbling-block to Protestants.

Martin Luther, however, is not accounted by Protestants as either madman or deceiver, yet we know what he *thought* he saw at the Wartburg. Probably the stake could not have burnt that belief out of him. And the moral effect on him was just the same. That is quite enough! You must grant the interposition of Providence, but you want no miracle at all.

Sir Charles Bell says, "We are incapable of comprehending anything of the manner in which the nerves are affected." It might please God to affect Joan's nerves so as to produce exactly the same results from her thinking she heard the voices as from her really hearing them. Only, we dare not limit His modes of action. And we must remember, that what the voices said *came true*.

As for the end being worthy of the means,

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the two greatest nations in the world might have been in a false position to each other to this day, to the indescribable sin and misery of both, had not Providence interfered. The English were *conscious* of the pressure of a strong hand : it saves them from the reproach of cowardice.

Dulce est pro patria mori.







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